

ROYAL ROMANCES
OF HISTORY

Royal Romances of History

By
Lyndon Orr

Three Volumes
Volume One



WALTER J. BLACK, INC.
2 Park Avenue
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Copyright, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, by Harper & Brothers
This book was first published under the title of
"FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY"

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY
THE FERRIS PRINTING COMPANY, NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE STORY OF ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA . . .	3
ABÉLARD AND HÉLOÏSE	25
QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE EARL OF LEICESTER .	51
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS AND LORD BOTHWELL .	73
QUEEN CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN AND THE MARQUIS MONALDESCHI	97
KING CHARLES II. AND NELL GWYN	121
MAURICE OF SAXONY AND ADRIENNE LECOUVREUR	143
THE STORY OF PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD STUART	169
DEAN SWIFT AND THE TWO ESTHERS . . .	189
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY AND MARY GODWIN . .	209
THE STORY OF THE HUGOS	229

**THE STORY OF
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA**

ROYAL ROMANCES OF HISTORY

THE STORY OF ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

OF all love stories that are known to human history, the love story of Antony and Cleopatra has been for nineteen centuries the most remarkable. It has tasked the resources of the plastic and the graphic arts. It has been made the theme of poets and of prose narrators. It has appeared and reappeared in a thousand forms, and it appeals as much to the imagination to-day as it did when Antony deserted his almost victorious troops and hastened in a swift galley from Actium in pursuit of Cleopatra.

The wonder of the story is explained by its extraordinary nature. Many men in private life have lost fortune and fame for the love of woman. Kings have incurred the odium of their people, and have cared nothing for it in

4 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

comparison with the joys of sense that come from the lingering caresses and clinging kisses. Cold-blooded statesmen, such as Parnell, have lost the leadership of their party and have gone down in history with a clouded name because of the fascination exercised upon them by some woman, often far from beautiful, and yet possessing the mysterious power which makes the triumphs of statesmanship seem slight in comparison with the swiftly flying hours of pleasure.

But in the case of Antony and Cleopatra alone do we find a man flinging away not merely the triumphs of civic honors or the headship of a state, but much more than these—the mastery of what was practically the world—in answer to the promptings of a woman's will. Hence the story of the Roman triumvir and the Egyptian queen is not like any other story that has yet been told. The sacrifice involved in it was so overwhelming, so instantaneous, and so complete as to set this narrative above all others. Shakespeare's genius has touched it with the glory of a great imagination. Dryden, using it in the finest of his plays, expressed its nature in the title "All for Love."

The distinguished Italian historian, Signor

Ferrero, the author of many books, has tried hard to eliminate nearly all the romantic elements from the tale, and to have us see in it not the triumph of love, but the blindness of ambition. Under his handling it becomes almost a sordid drama of man's pursuit of power and of woman's selfishness. Let us review the story as it remains, even after we have taken full account of Ferrero's criticism. Has the world for nineteen hundred years been blinded by a show of sentiment? Has it so absolutely been misled by those who lived and wrote in the days which followed closely on the events that make up this extraordinary narrative?

In answering these questions we must consider, in the first place, the scene, and, in the second place, the psychology of the two central characters who for so long a time have been regarded as the very embodiment of unchecked passion.

As to the scene, it must be remembered that the Egypt of those days was not Egyptian as we understand the word, but rather Greek. Cleopatra herself was of Greek descent. The kingdom of Egypt had been created by a general of Alexander the Great after that splendid warrior's death. Its capital, the most bril-

6 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

liant city of the Greco-Roman world, had been founded by Alexander himself, who gave to it his name. With his own hands he traced out the limits of the city and issued the most peremptory orders that it should be made the metropolis of the entire world. The orders of a king cannot give enduring greatness to a city; but Alexander's keen eye and marvelous brain saw at once that the site of Alexandria was such that a great commercial community planted there would live and flourish throughout succeeding ages. He was right; for within a century this new capital of Egypt leaped to the forefront among the exchanges of the world's commerce, while everything that art could do was lavished on its embellishment.

Alexandria lay upon a projecting tongue of land so situated that the whole trade of the Mediterranean centered there. Down the Nile there floated to its gates the barbaric wealth of Africa. To it came the treasures of the East, brought from afar by caravans—silks from China, spices and pearls from India, and enormous masses of gold and silver from lands scarcely known. In its harbor were the vessels of every country, from Asia in the East to Spain and Gaul and even Britain in the West.

When Cleopatra, a young girl of seventeen, succeeded to the throne of Egypt the population of Alexandria amounted to a million souls. The customs duties collected at the port would, in terms of modern money, amount each year to more than thirty million dollars, even though the imposts were not heavy. The people, who may be described as Greek at the top and Oriental at the bottom, were boisterous and pleasure-loving, devoted to splendid spectacles, with horse-racing, gambling, and dissipation; yet at the same time they were an artistic people, loving music passionately, and by no means idle, since one part of the city was devoted to large and prosperous manufactories of linen, paper, glass, and muslin.

To the outward eye Alexandria was extremely beautiful. Through its entire length ran two great boulevards, shaded and diversified by mighty trees and parterres of multicolored flowers, amid which fountains plashed and costly marbles gleamed. One-fifth of the whole city was known as the Royal Residence. In it were the palaces of the reigning family, the great museum, and the famous library which the Arabs later burned. There were parks and gardens brilliant with tropical foliage and

8 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

adorned with the masterpieces of Grecian sculpture, while sphinxes and obelisks gave a suggestion of Oriental strangeness. As one looked seaward his eye beheld over the blue water the snow-white rocks of the sheltering island, Pharos, on which was reared a lighthouse four hundred feet in height and justly numbered among the seven wonders of the world. Altogether, Alexandria was a city of wealth, of beauty, of stirring life, of excitement, and of pleasure. Ferrero has aptly likened it to Paris—not so much the Paris of to-day as the Paris of forty years ago, when the Second Empire flourished in all its splendor as the home of joy and strange delights.

Over the country of which Alexandria was the capital Cleopatra came to reign at seventeen. Following the odd custom which the Greek dynasty of the Ptolemies had inherited from their Egyptian predecessors, she was betrothed to her own brother. He, however, was a mere child of less than twelve, and was under the control of evil counselors, who, in his name, gained control of the capital and drove Cleopatra into exile. Until then she had been a mere girl; but now the spirit of a woman who was wronged blazed up in her and called out

all her latent powers. Hastening to Syria, she gathered about herself an army and led it against her foes.

But meanwhile Julius Cæsar, the greatest man of ancient times, had arrived at Alexandria backed by an army of his veterans. Against him no resistance would avail. Then came a brief moment during which the Egyptian king and the Egyptian queen each strove to win the favor of the Roman imperator. The king and his advisers had many arts, and so had Cleopatra. One thing, however, she possessed which struck the balance in her favor, and this was a woman's fascination.

According to the story, Cæsar was unwilling to receive her. There came into his presence, as he sat in the palace, a group of slaves bearing a long roll of matting, bound carefully and seeming to contain some precious work of art. The slaves made signs that they were bearing a gift to Cæsar. The master of Egypt bade them unwrap the gift that he might see it. They did so, and out of the wrapping came Cleopatra—a radiant vision, appealing, irresistible. Next morning it became known everywhere that Cleopatra had remained in Cæsar's quarters through the night and that her ene-

10 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

mies were now his enemies. In desperation they rushed upon his legions, casting aside all pretense of amity. There ensued a fierce contest, but the revolt was quenched in blood.

This was a crucial moment in Cleopatra's life. She had sacrificed all that a woman has to give; but she had not done so from any love of pleasure or from wantonness. She was queen of Egypt, and she had redeemed her kingdom and kept it by her sacrifice. One should not condemn her too severely. In a sense, her act was one of heroism like that of Judith in the tent of Holofernes. But beyond all question it changed her character. It taught her the secret of her own great power. Henceforth she was no longer a mere girl, nor a woman of the ordinary type. Her contact with so great a mind as Cæsar's quickened her intellect. Her knowledge that, by the charms of sense, she had mastered even him transformed her into a strange and wonderful creature. She learned to study the weaknesses of men, to play on their emotions, to appeal to every subtle taste and fancy. In her were blended mental power and that illusive, indefinable gift which is called charm.

For Cleopatra was never beautiful. Signor

Ferrero seems to think this fact to be discovery of his own, but it was set down by Plutarch in a very striking passage written less than a century after Cleopatra and Antony died. We may quote here what the Greek historian said of her:

Her actual beauty was far from being so remarkable that none could be compared with her, nor was it such that it would strike your fancy when you saw her first. Yet the influence of her presence, if you lingered near her, was irresistible. Her attractive personality, joined with the charm of her conversation, and the individual touch that she gave to everything she said or did, were utterly bewitching. It was delightful merely to hear the music of her voice, with which, like an instrument of many strings, she could pass from one language to another.

Cæsar had left Cleopatra firmly seated on the throne of Egypt. For six years she reigned with great intelligence, keeping order in her dominions, and patronizing with discrimination both arts and letters. But ere long the convulsions of the Roman state once more caused her extreme anxiety. Cæsar had been assassinated, and there ensued a period of civil war. Out of it emerged two striking figures which were absolutely contrasted in their character. One

12 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

was Octavian, the adopted son of Cæsar, a man who, though still quite young and possessed of great ability, was cunning, cold-blooded, and deceitful. The other was Antony, a soldier by training, and with all a soldier's bluntness, courage, and lawlessness.

The Roman world was divided for the time between these two men, Antony receiving the government of the East, Octavian that of the West. In the year which had preceded this division Cleopatra had wavered between the two opposite factions at Rome. In so doing she had excited the suspicion of Antony, and he now demanded of her an explanation.

One must have some conception of Antony himself in order to understand the events that followed. He was essentially a soldier, of excellent family, being related to Cæsar himself. As a very young man he was exceedingly handsome, and bad companions led him into the pursuit of vicious pleasure. He had scarcely come of age when he found that he owed the enormous sum of two hundred and fifty talents, equivalent to half a million dollars in the money of to-day. But he was much more than a mere man of pleasure, given over to drinking and to dissipation. Men might tell of his escapades,

as when he drove about the streets of Rome in a common cab, dangling his legs out of the window while he shouted forth drunken songs of revelry. This was not the whole of Antony. Joining the Roman army in Syria, he showed himself to be a soldier of great personal bravery, a clever strategist, and also humane and merciful in the hour of victory.

Unlike most Romans, Antony wore a full beard. His forehead was large, and his nose was of the distinctive Roman type. His look was so bold and masculine that people likened him to Hercules. His democratic manners endeared him to the army. He wore a plain tunic covered with a large, coarse mantle, and carried a huge sword at his side, despising ostentation. Even his faults and follies added to his popularity. He would sit down at the common soldiers' mess and drink with them, telling them stories and clapping them on the back. He spent money like water, quickly recognizing any daring deed which his legionaries performed. In this respect he was like Napoleon; and, like Napoleon, he had a vein of florid eloquence which was criticized by literary men, but which went straight to the heart of the private soldier. In a word, he was a powerful,

14 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

virile, passionate, able man, rough, as were nearly all his countrymen, but strong and true.

It was to this general that Cleopatra was to answer, and with a firm reliance on the charms which had subdued Antony's great commander, Cæsar, she set out in person for Cilicia, in Asia Minor, sailing up the river Cydnus to the place where Antony was encamped with his army. Making all allowance for the exaggeration of historians, there can be no doubt that she appeared to him like some dreamy vision. Her barge was gilded, and was wafted on its way by swelling sails of Tyrian purple. The oars which smote the water were of shining silver. As she drew near the Roman general's camp the languorous music of flutes and harps breathed forth a strain of invitation.

Cleopatra herself lay upon a divan set upon the deck of the barge beneath a canopy of woven gold. She was dressed to resemble Venus, while girls about her personated nymphs and Graces. Delicate perfumes diffused themselves from the vessel; and at last, as she drew near the shore, all the people for miles about were gathered there, leaving Antony to sit alone in the tribunal where he was dispensing justice.

Word was brought to him that Venus had come to feast with Bacchus. Antony, though still suspicious of Cleopatra, sent her an invitation to dine with him in state. With graceful tact she sent him a counter-invitation, and he came. The magnificence of his reception dazzled the man who had so long known only a soldier's fare, or at most the crude entertainments which he had enjoyed in Rome. A marvelous display of lights was made. Thousands upon thousands of candles shone brilliantly, arranged in squares and circles; while the banquet itself was one that symbolized the studied luxury of the East.

At this time Cleopatra was twenty-seven years of age—a period of life which modern physiologists have called the crisis in a woman's growth. She had never really loved before, since she had given herself to Cæsar, not because she cared for him, but to save her kingdom. She now came into the presence of one whose manly beauty and strong passions were matched by her own subtlety and appealing charm.

When Antony addressed her he felt himself a rustic in her presence. Almost resentful, he betook himself to the coarse language of the

16 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

camp. Cleopatra, with marvelous adaptability, took her tone from his, and thus in a moment put him at his ease. Ferrero, who takes a most unfavorable view of her character and personality, nevertheless explains the secret of her fascination:

Herself utterly cold and callous, insensitive by nature to the flame of true devotion, Cleopatra was one of those women gifted with an unerring instinct for all the various roads to men's affections. She could be the shrinking, modest girl, too shy to reveal her half-unconscious emotions of jealousy and depression and self-abandonment, or a woman carried away by the sweep of a fiery and uncontrollable passion. She could tickle the esthetic sensibilities of her victims by rich and gorgeous festivals, by the fantastic adornment of her own person and her palace, or by brilliant discussions on literature and art; she could conjure up all their grossest instincts with the vilest obscenities of conversation, with the free and easy jocularities of a woman of the camps.

These last words are far too strong, and they represent only Ferrero's personal opinion; yet there is no doubt that she met every mood of Antony's so that he became enthralled with her at once. No such woman as this had ever cast her eyes on him before. He had a wife at home—a most disreputable wife—so that he

cared little for domestic ties. Later, out of policy, he made another marriage with the sister of his rival, Octavian, but this wife he never cared for. His heart and soul were given up to Cleopatra, the woman who could be a comrade in the camp and a fount of tenderness in their hours of dalliance, and who possessed the keen intellect of a man joined to the arts and fascinations of a woman.

On her side she found in Antony an ardent lover, a man of vigorous masculinity, and, moreover, a soldier whose armies might well sustain her on the throne of Egypt. That there was calculation mingled with her love, no one can doubt. That some calculation also entered into Antony's affection is likewise certain. Yet this does not affect the truth that each was wholly given to the other. Why should it have lessened her love for him to feel that he could protect her and defend her? Why should it have lessened his love for her to know that she was queen of the richest country in the world—one that could supply his needs, sustain his armies, and gild his triumphs with magnificence?

There are many instances in history of regnant queens who loved and yet whose love was

18 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

not dissociated from the policy of state. Such were Anne of Austria, Elizabeth of England, and the unfortunate Mary Stuart. Such, too, we cannot fail to think, was Cleopatra.

The two remained together for ten years. In this time Antony was separated from her only during a campaign in the East. In Alexandria he ceased to seem a Roman citizen and gave himself up wholly to the charms of this enticing woman. Many stories are told of their good fellowship and close intimacy. Plutarch quotes Plato as saying that there are four kinds of flattery, but he adds that Cleopatra had a thousand. She was the supreme mistress of the art of pleasing.

Whether Antony were serious or mirthful, she had at the instant some new delight or some new charm to meet his wishes. At every turn she was with him both day and night. With him she threw dice; with him she drank; with him she hunted; and when he exercised himself in arms she was there to admire and applaud.

At night the pair would disguise themselves as servants and wander about the streets of Alexandria. In fact, more than once they were set upon in the slums and treated roughly by the rabble who did not recognize them. Cleo-

patra was always alluring, always tactful, often humorous, and full of frolic.

Then came the shock of Antony's final breach with Octavian. Either Antony or his rival must rule the world. Cleopatra's lover once more became the Roman general, and with a great fleet proceeded to the coast of Greece, where his enemy was encamped. Antony had raised a hundred and twelve thousand troops and five hundred ships—a force far superior to that commanded by Octavian. Cleopatra was there with sixty ships.

In the days that preceded the final battle much took place which still remains obscure. It seems likely that Antony desired to become again the Roman, while Cleopatra wished him to thrust Rome aside and return to Egypt with her, to reign there as an independent king. To her Rome was almost a barbarian city. In it she could not hold sway as she could in her beautiful Alexandria, with its blue skies and velvet turf and tropical flowers. At Rome Antony would be distracted by the cares of state, and she would lose her lover. At Alexandria she would have him for her very own.

The clash came when the hostile fleets met off the promontory of Actium. At its crisis Cleo-

20 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

patra, prematurely concluding that the battle was lost, of a sudden gave the signal for retreat and put out to sea with her fleet. This was the crucial moment. Antony, mastered by his love, forgot all else, and in a swift ship started in pursuit of her, abandoning his fleet and army to win or lose as fortune might decide. For him the world was nothing; the dark-browed Queen of Egypt, imperious and yet caressing, was everything. Never was such a prize and never were such great hopes thrown carelessly away. After waiting seven days Antony's troops, still undefeated, finding that their commander would not return to them, surrendered to Octavian, who thus became the master of an empire.

Later his legions assaulted Alexandria, and there Antony was twice defeated. At last Cleopatra saw her great mistake. She had made her lover give up the hope of being Rome's dictator, but in so doing she had also lost the chance of ruling with him tranquilly in Egypt. She shut herself behind the barred doors of the royal sepulcher; and, lest she should be molested there, she sent forth word that she had died. Her proud spirit could not brook the thought that she might be seized and carried

as a prisoner to Rome. She was too much a queen in soul to be led in triumph up the Sacred Way to the Capitol with golden chains clanking on her slender wrists.

Antony, believing the report that she was dead, fell upon his sword; but in his dying moments he was carried into the presence of the woman for whom he had given all. With her arms about him, his spirit passed away; and soon after she, too, met death, whether by a poisoned draught or by the storied asp no one can say.

Cleopatra had lived the mistress of a splendid kingdom. She had successively captivated two of the greatest men whom Rome had ever seen. She died, like a queen, to escape disgrace. Whatever modern critics may have to say concerning small details, this story still remains the strangest love story of which the world has any record.

ABÉLARD AND HÉLOÏSE

ABÉLARD AND HÉLOÏSE

MANY a woman, amid the transports of passionate and languishing love, has cried out in a sort of ecstasy:

“ I love you as no woman ever loved a man before! ”

When she says this she believes it. Her whole soul is aflame with the ardor of emotion. It really seems to her that no one ever could have loved so much as she.

This cry—spontaneous, untaught, sincere—has become almost one of those conventionalities of amorous expression which belong to the vocabulary of self-abandonment. Every woman who utters it, when torn by the almost terrible extravagance of a great love, believes that no one before her has ever said it, and that in her own case it is absolutely true.

Yet, how many women are really faithful to the end? Very many, indeed, if circumstances admit of easy faithfulness. A high-souled, generous, ardent nature will endure an infinity of disillusionment, of misfortune, of neglect, and even of ill treatment. Even so, the flame,

26 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

though it may sink low, can be revived again to burn as brightly as before. But in order that this may be so it is necessary that the object of such a wonderful devotion be alive, that he be present and visible; or, if he be absent, that there should still exist some hope of renewing the exquisite intimacy of the past.

A man who is sincerely loved may be compelled to take long journeys which will separate him for an indefinite time from the woman who has given her heart to him, and she will still be constant. He may be imprisoned, perhaps for life, yet there is always the hope of his release or of his escape; and some women will be faithful to him and will watch for his return. But, given a situation which absolutely bars out hope, which sunders two souls in such a way that they can never be united in this world, and there we have a test so terribly severe that few even of the most loyal and intensely clinging lovers can endure it.

Not that such a situation would lead a woman to turn to any other man than the one to whom she had given her very life; but we might expect that at least her strong desire would cool and weaken. She might cherish his memory among the precious souvenirs of her love life;

but that she should still pour out the same rapturous, unstinted passion as before seems almost too much to believe. The annals of emotion record only one such instance; and so this instance has become known to all, and has been cherished for nearly a thousand years. It involves the story of a woman who did love, perhaps, as no one ever loved before or since; for she was subjected to this cruel test, and she met the test not alone completely, but triumphantly and almost fiercely.

The story is, of course, the story of Abélard and Héloïse. It has many times been falsely told. Portions of it have been omitted, and other portions of it have been garbled. A whole literature has grown up around the subject. It may well be worth our while to clear away the ambiguities and the doubtful points, and once more to tell it simply, without bias, and with a strict adherence to what seems to be the truth attested by authentic records.

There is one circumstance connected with the story which we must specially note. The narrative does something more than set forth the one quite unimpeachable instance of unconquered constancy. It shows how, in the last analysis, that which touches the human heart

28 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

has more vitality and more enduring interest than what concerns the intellect or those achievements of the human mind which are external to our emotional nature.

Pierre Abélard was undoubtedly the boldest and most creative reasoner of his time. As a wandering teacher he drew after him thousands of enthusiastic students. He gave a strong impetus to learning. He was a marvelous logician and an accomplished orator. Among his pupils were men who afterward became prelates of the church and distinguished scholars. In the Dark Age, when the dictates of reason were almost wholly disregarded, he fought fearlessly for intellectual freedom. He was practically the founder of the University of Paris, which in turn became the mother of medieval and modern universities.

He was, therefore, a great and striking figure in the history of civilization. Nevertheless he would to-day be remembered only by scholars and students of the Middle Ages were it not for the fact that he inspired the most enduring love that history records. If Héloïse had never loved him, and if their story had not been so tragic and so poignant, he would be to-day only a name known to but a few. His final

resting-place, in the cemetery of Père Lachaise, in Paris, would not be sought out by thousands every year and kept bright with flowers, the gift of those who have themselves both loved and suffered.

Pierre Abélard—or, more fully, Pierre Abélard de Palais—was a native of Brittany, born in the year 1079. His father was a knight, the lord of the manor; but Abélard cared little for the life of a petty noble; and so he gave up his seignorial rights to his brothers and went forth to become, first of all a student, and then a public lecturer and teacher.

His student days ended abruptly in Paris, where he had enrolled himself as the pupil of a distinguished philosopher, Guillaume de Champeaux; but one day Abélard engaged in a disputation with his master. His wonderful combination of eloquence, logic, and originality utterly routed Champeaux, who was thus humiliated in the presence of his disciples. He was the first of many enemies that Abélard was destined to make in his long and stormy career. From that moment the young Breton himself set up as a teacher of philosophy, and the brilliancy of his discourses soon drew to him throngs of students from all over Europe.

30 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

Before proceeding with the story of Abélard it is well to reconstruct, however slightly, a picture of the times in which he lived. It was an age when Western Europe was but partly civilized. Pedantry and learning of the most minute sort existed side by side with the most violent excesses of medieval barbarism. The Church had undertaken the gigantic task of subduing and enlightening the semi-pagan peoples of France and Germany and England.

When we look back at that period some will unjustly censure Rome for not controlling more completely the savagery of the medievals. More fairly should we wonder at the great measure of success which had already been achieved. The leaven of a true Christianity was working in the half-pagan populations. It had not yet completely reached the nobles and the knights, or even all the ecclesiastics who served it and who were consecrated to its mission. Thus, amid a sort of political chaos were seen the glaring evils of feudalism. Kings and princes and their followers lived the lives of swine. Private blood-feuds were regarded lightly. There was as yet no single central power. Every man carried his life in his hand, trusting to sword and dagger for protection.

The cities were still mere hamlets clustered around great castles or fortified cathedrals. In Paris itself the network of dark lanes, ill lighted and unguarded, was the scene of midnight murder and assassination. In the winter-time wolves infested the town by night. Men-at-arms, with torches and spears, often had to march out from their barracks to assail the snarling, yelping packs of savage animals that hunger drove from the surrounding forests.

Paris of the twelfth century was typical of France itself, which was harried by human wolves intent on rapine and wanton plunder. There were great schools of theology, but the students who attended them fought and slashed one another. If a man's life was threatened he must protect it by his own strength or by gathering about him a band of friends. No one was safe. No one was tolerant. Very few were free from the grosser vices. Even in some of the religious houses the brothers would meet at night for unseemly revels, splashing the stone floors with wine and shrieking in a delirium of drunkenness. The rules of the Church enjoined temperance, continence, and celibacy; but the decrees of Leo IX. and Nicholas II. and

32 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

Alexander II. and Gregory were only partially observed.

In fact, Europe was in a state of chaos—political and moral and social. Only very slowly was order emerging from sheer anarchy. We must remember this when we recall some facts which meet us in the story of Abélard and Héloïse.

The jealousy of Champeaux drove Abélard for a time from Paris. He taught and lectured at several other centers of learning, always admired, and yet at the same time denounced by many for his advocacy of reason as against blind faith. During the years of his wandering he came to have a wide knowledge of the world and of human nature. If we try to imagine him as he was in his thirty-fifth year we shall find in him a remarkable combination of attractive qualities.

It must be remembered that though, in a sense, he was an ecclesiastic, he had not yet been ordained to the priesthood, but was rather a canon—a person who did not belong to any religious order, though he was supposed to live according to a definite set of religious rules and as a member of a religious community. Abélard, however, made rather light of his

churchly associations. He was at once an accomplished man of the world and a profound scholar. There was nothing of the recluse about him. He mingled with his fellow men, whom he dominated by the charm of his personality. He was eloquent, ardent, and persuasive. He could turn a delicate compliment as skilfully as he could elaborate a syllogism. His rich voice had in it a seductive quality which was never without its effect.

Handsome and well formed, he possessed as much vigor of body as of mind. Nor were his accomplishments entirely those of the scholar. He wrote dainty verses, which he also set to music, and which he sang himself with a rare skill. Some have called him "the first of the troubadours," and many who cared nothing for his skill in logic admired him for his gifts as a musician and a poet. Altogether, he was one to attract attention wherever he went, for none could fail to recognize his power.

It was soon after his thirty-fifth year that he returned to Paris, where he was welcomed by thousands. With much tact he reconciled himself to his enemies, so that his life now seemed to be full of promise and of sunshine.

It was at this time that he became acquainted

34 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

with a very beautiful young girl named Héloïse. She was only eighteen years of age, yet already she possessed not only beauty, but many accomplishments which were then quite rare in women, since she both wrote and spoke a number of languages, and, like Abélard, was a lover of music and poetry. Héloïse was the illegitimate daughter of a canon of patrician blood; so that she is said to have been a worthy representative of the noble house of the Montmorencys—famous throughout French history for chivalry and charm.

Up to this time we do not know precisely what sort of life Abélard had lived in private. His enemies declared that he had squandered his substance in vicious ways. His friends denied this, and represented him as strict and chaste. The truth probably lies between these two assertions. He was naturally a pleasure-loving man of the world, who may very possibly have relieved his severer studies by occasional revelry and light love. It is not at all likely that he was addicted to gross passions and low practices.

But such as he was, when he first saw Héloïse he conceived for her a violent attachment. Carefully guarded in the house of her uncle,

Fulbert, it was difficult at first for Abélard to meet her save in the most casual way; yet every time that he heard her exquisite voice and watched her graceful manners he became more and more infatuated. His studies suddenly seemed tame and colorless beside the fierce scarlet flame which blazed up in his heart.

Nevertheless, it was because of these studies and of his great reputation as a scholar that he managed to obtain access to Héloïse. He flattered her uncle and made a chance proposal that he should himself become an inmate of Fulbert's household in order that he might teach this girl of so much promise. Such an offer coming from so brilliant a man was joyfully accepted.

From that time Abélard could visit Héloïse without restraint. He was her teacher, and the two spent hours together, nominally in the study of Greek and Hebrew; but doubtless very little was said between them upon such unattractive subjects. On the contrary, with all his wide experience of life, his eloquence, his perfect manners, and his fascination, Abélard put forth his power to captivate the senses of a girl still in her teens and quite ignorant of the

36 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

world. As Rémusat says, he employed to win her the genius which had overwhelmed all the great centers of learning in the Western world.

It was then that the pleasures of knowledge, the joys of thought, the emotions of eloquence, were all called into play to charm and move and plunge into a profound and strange intoxication this noble and tender heart which had never known either love or sorrow. . . . One can imagine that everything helped on the inevitable end. Their studies gave them opportunities to see each other freely, and also permitted them to be alone together. Then their books lay open between them; but either long periods of silence stilled their reading, or else words of deepening intimacy made them forget their studies altogether. The eyes of the two lovers turned from the book to mingle their glances, and then to turn away in a confusion that was conscious.

Hand would touch hand, apparently by accident; and when conversation ceased, Abélard would often hear the long, quivering sigh which showed the strange, half-frightened, and yet exquisite joy which Héloïse experienced.

It was not long before the girl's heart had been wholly won. Transported by her emotion, she met the caresses of her lover with those as unrestrained as his. Her very innocence deprived her of the protection which older women

would have had. All was given freely, and even wildly, by Héloïse; and all was taken by Abélard, who afterward himself declared:

“The pleasure of teaching her to love surpassed the delightful fragrance of all the perfumes in the world.”

Yet these two could not always live in a paradise which was entirely their own. The world of Paris took notice of their close association. Some poems written to Héloïse by Abélard, as if in letters of fire, were found and shown to Fulbert, who, until this time, had suspected nothing. Angrily he ordered Abélard to leave his house. He forbade his niece to see her lover any more.

But the two could not be separated; and, indeed, there was good reason why they should still cling together. Secretly Héloïse left her uncle's house and fled through the narrow lanes of Paris to the dwelling of Abélard's sister, Denyse, where Abélard himself was living. There, presently, the young girl gave birth to a son, who was named Astrolabe, after an instrument used by astronomers, since both the father and the mother felt that the offspring of so great a love should have no ordinary name.

Fulbert was furious, and rightly so. His hos-

38 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

pitality had been outraged and his niece dishonored. He insisted that the pair should at once be married. Here was revealed a certain weakness in the character of Abélard. He consented to the marriage, but insisted that it should be kept an utter secret.

Oddly enough, it was Héloïse herself who objected to becoming the wife of the man she loved. Unselfishness could go no farther. She saw that, were he to marry her, his advancement in the Church would be almost impossible; for, while the very minor clergy sometimes married in spite of the papal bulls, matrimony was becoming a fatal bar to ecclesiastical promotion. And so Héloïse pleaded pitifully, both with her uncle and with Abélard, that there should be no marriage. She would rather bear all manner of disgrace than stand in the way of Abélard's advancement.

He has himself given some of the words in which she pleaded with him:

What glory shall I win from you, when I have made you quite inglorious and have humbled both of us? What vengeance will the world inflict on me if I deprive it of one so brilliant? What curses will follow such a marriage? How outrageous would it be that you, whom nature created for the universal good,

should be devoted to one woman and plunged into such disgrace? I loathe the thought of a marriage which would humiliate you.

Indeed, every possible effort which another woman in her place would employ to make him marry her she used in order to dissuade him. Finally, her sweet face streaming with tears, she uttered that tremendous sentence which makes one really think that she loved him as no other woman ever loved a man. She cried out, in an agony of self-sacrifice:

“I would rather be your mistress than the wife even of an emperor!”

Nevertheless, the two were married, and Abélard returned to his lecture-room and to his studies. For months they met but seldom. Meanwhile, however, the taunts and innuendos directed against Héloïse so irritated Fulbert that he broke his promise of secrecy, and told his friends that Abélard and Héloïse were man and wife. They went to Héloïse for confirmation. Once more she showed in an extraordinary way the depth of her devotion.

“I am no wife,” she said. “It is not true that Abélard has married me. My uncle merely tells you this to save my reputation.”

40 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

They asked her whether she would swear to this; and, without a moment's hesitation, this pure and noble woman took an oath upon the Scriptures that there had been no marriage.

Fulbert was enraged by this. He ill-treated Héloïse, and, furthermore, he forbade Abélard to visit her. The girl, therefore, again left her uncle's house and betook herself to a convent just outside of Paris, where she assumed the habit of a nun as a disguise. There Abélard continued from time to time to meet her.

When Fulbert heard of this he put his own interpretation on it. He believed that Abélard intended to ignore the marriage altogether, and that possibly he might even marry some other woman. In any case, he now hated Abélard with all his heart; and he resolved to take a fearful and unnatural vengeance which would at once prevent his enemy from making any other marriage, while at the same time it would debar him from ecclesiastical preferment.

To carry out his plot Fulbert first bribed a man who was the body-servant of Abélard, watching at the door of his room each night. Then he hired the services of four ruffians. After Abélard had retired and was deep in slumber the treacherous valet unbarred the

door. The hirelings of Fulbert entered and fell upon the sleeping man. Three of them bound him fast, while the fourth, with a razor, inflicted on him the most shameful mutilation that is possible. Then, extinguishing the lights, the wretches slunk away and were lost in darkness, leaving behind their victim bound to his couch, uttering cries of torment and bathed in his own blood.

It is a shocking story, and yet it is intensely characteristic of the lawless and barbarous era in which it happened. Early the next morning the news flew rapidly through Paris. The city hummed like a bee-hive. Citizens and students and ecclesiastics poured into the street and surrounded the house of Abélard.

“Almost the entire city,” says Fulques, as quoted by McCabe, “went clamoring toward his house. Women wept as if each one had lost her husband.”

Unmanned though he was, Abélard still retained enough of the spirit of his time to seek vengeance. He, in his turn, employed ruffians whom he set upon the track of those who had assaulted him. The treacherous valet and one of Fulbert’s hirelings were run down, seized, and mutilated precisely as Abélard had been;

42 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

and their eyes were blinded. A third was lodged in prison. Fulbert himself was accused before one of the Church courts, which alone had power to punish an ecclesiastic, and all his goods were confiscated.

But, meantime, how did it fare with Héloïse? Her grief was greater than his own, while her love and her devotion were absolutely undiminished. But Abélard now showed a selfishness—and indeed, a meanness—far beyond any that he had before exhibited. Héloïse could no more be his wife. He made it plain that he put no trust in her fidelity. He was unwilling that she should live in the world while he could not; and so he told her sternly that she must take the veil and bury herself for ever in a nunnery.

The pain and shame which she experienced at this came wholly from the fact that evidently Abélard did not trust her. Long afterward she wrote:

God knows I should not have hesitated, at your command, to precede or to follow you to hell itself!

It was his distrust that cut her to the heart. Still, her love for him was so intense that she obeyed his order. Soon after she took the

vows; and in the convent chapel, shaken with sobs, she knelt before the altar and assumed the veil of a cloistered nun. Abélard himself put on the black tunic of a Benedictine monk and entered the Abbey of St. Denis.

It is unnecessary here to follow out all the details of the lives of Abélard and Héloïse after this heart-rendering scene. Abélard passed through many years of strife and disappointment, and even of humiliation; for on one occasion, just as he had silenced Guillaume de Champeaux, so he himself was silenced and put to rout by Bernard of Clairvaux—"a frail, tense, absorbed, dominant little man, whose face was white and worn with suffering," but in whose eyes there was a light of supreme strength. Bernard represented pure faith, as Abélard represented pure reason; and the two men met before a great council to match their respective powers.

Bernard, with fiery eloquence, brought a charge of heresy against Abélard in an oration which was like a charge of cavalry. When he had concluded Abélard rose with an ashen face, stammered out a few words, and sat down. He was condemned by the council, and his works were ordered to be burned.

44 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

All his later life was one of misfortune, of humiliation, and even of personal danger. The reckless monks whom he tried to rule rose fiercely against him. His life was threatened. He betook himself to a desolate and lonely place, where he built for himself a hut of reeds and rushes, hoping to spend his final years in meditation. But there were many who had not forgotten his ability as a teacher. These flocked by hundreds to the desert place where he abode. His hut was surrounded by tents and rude hovels, built by his scholars for their shelter.

Thus Abélard resumed his teaching, though in a very different frame of mind. In time he built a structure of wood and stone, which he called the Paraclete, some remains of which can still be seen.

All this time no word had passed between him and Héloïse. But presently Abélard wrote and gave to the world a curious and exceedingly frank book, which he called *The Story of My Misfortunes*. A copy of it reached the hands of Héloïse, and she at once sent to Abélard the first of a series of letters which have remained unique in the literature of love.

Ten years had passed, and yet the woman's

heart was as faithful and as full of yearning as on the day when the two had parted. It has been said that the letters are not genuine, and they must be read with this assertion in mind; yet it is difficult to believe that any one save Héloïse herself could have flung a human soul into such frankly passionate utterances, or that any imitator could have done the work.

In her first letter, which was sent to Abélard written upon parchment, she said:

At thy command I would change, not merely my costume, but my very soul, so entirely art thou the sole possessor of my body and my spirit. Never, God is my witness, never have I sought anything in thee but thyself; I have sought thee, and not thy gifts. I have not looked to the marriage-bond or dowry.

She begged him to write to her, and to lead her to God, as once he had led her into the mysteries of pleasure. Abélard answered in a letter, friendly to be sure, but formal—the letter of a priest to a cloistered nun. The opening words of it are characteristic of the whole:

To Héloïse, his sister in Christ, from Abélard, her brother in Him.

The letter was a long one, but throughout the whole of it the writer's tone was cold and pru-

46 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

dent. Its very coldness roused her soul to a passionate revolt. Her second letter bursts forth in a sort of anguish:

How hast thou been able to frame such thoughts, dearest? How hast thou found words to convey them? Oh, if I dared but call God cruel to me! Oh, most wretched of all creatures that I am! So sweet did I find the pleasures of our loving days that I cannot bring myself to reject them or to banish them from my memory. Wheresoever I go, they thrust themselves upon my vision, and rekindle the old desire.

But Abélard knew only too well that not in this life could there be anything save spiritual love between himself and Héloïse. He wrote to her again and again, always in the same remote and unimpassioned way. He tells her about the history of monasticism, and discusses with her matters of theology and ethics; but he never writes one word to feed the flame that is consuming her. The woman understood at last; and by degrees her letters became as calm as his—suffused, however, with a tenderness and feeling which showed that in her heart of hearts she was still entirely given to him.

After some years Abélard left his dwelling at the Paraclete, and there was founded there a religious house of which Héloïse became the

abbess. All the world respected her for her sweetness, her wisdom, and the purity of her character. She made friends as easily as Abélard made enemies. Even Bernard, who had overthrown her husband, sought out Héloïse to ask for her advice and counsel.

Abélard died while on his way to Rome, whither he was journeying in order to undergo a penalty; and his body was brought back to the Paraclete, where it was entombed. Over it for twenty-two years Héloïse watched with tender care; and when she died, her body was laid beside that of her lover.

To-day their bones are mingled as she would have desired them to be mingled. The stones of their tomb in the great cemetery of Père Lachaise were brought from the ruins of the Paraclete, and above the sarcophagus are two recumbent figures, the whole being the work of the artist Alexandre Lenoir, who died in 1836. The figure representing Héloïse is not, however, an authentic likeness. The model for it was a lady belonging to a noble family of France, and the figure itself was brought to Père Lachaise from the ancient Collège de Beauvais.

The letters of Héloïse have been read and

48 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

imitated throughout the whole of the last nine centuries. Some have found in them the utterances of a woman whose love of love was greater than her love of God and whose intensity of passion nothing could subdue; and so these have condemned her. But others, like Chateaubriand, have more truly seen in them a pure and noble spirit to whom fate had been very cruel; and who was, after all, writing to the man who had been her lawful husband.

Some of the most famous imitations of her letters are those in the ancient poem entitled, "The Romance of the Rose," written by Jean de Meung, in the thirteenth century; and in modern times her first letter was paraphrased by Alexander Pope, and in French by Colardeau. There exist in English half a dozen translations of them, with Abélard's replies. It is interesting to remember that practically all the other writings of Abélard remained unpublished and unedited until a very recent period. He was a remarkable figure as a philosopher and scholar; but the world cares for him only because he was loved by Héloïse.

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE
EARL OF LEICESTER

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE EARL OF LEICESTER

HISTORY has many romantic stories to tell of the part which women have played in determining the destinies of nations. Sometimes it is a woman's beauty that causes the shifting of a province. Again it is another woman's rich possessions that incite invasion and lead to bloody wars. Marriages or dowries, or the refusal of marriages and the lack of dowries, inheritance through an heiress, the failure of a male succession—in these and in many other ways women have set their mark indelibly upon the trend of history.

However, if we look over these different events we shall find that it is not so much the mere longing for a woman—the desire to have her as a queen—that has seriously affected the annals of any nation. Kings, like ordinary men, have paid their suit and then have ridden away repulsed, yet not seriously dejected. Most royal marriages are made either to secure the succession to a throne by a legitimate **line** of heirs or else to unite adjoining states

52 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

and make a powerful kingdom out of two that are less powerful. But, as a rule, kings have found greater delight in some sheltered bower remote from courts than in the castled halls and well-cared-for nooks where their own wives and children have been reared with all the appurtenances of legitimacy.

There are not many stories that hang persistently about the love-making of a single woman. In the case of one or another we may find an episode or two—something dashing, something spirited or striking, something brilliant and exhilarating, or something sad. But for a woman's whole life to be spent in courtship that meant nothing and that was only a clever aid to diplomacy—this is surely an unusual and really wonderful thing.

It is the more unusual because the woman herself was not intended by nature to be wasted upon the cold and cheerless sport of chancellors and counselors and men who had no thought of her except to use her as a pawn. She was hot-blooded, descended from a fiery race, and one whose temper was quick to leap into the passion of a man.

In studying this phase of the long and interesting life of Elizabeth of England we must

notice several important facts. In the first place, she gave herself, above all else, to the maintenance of England—not an England that would be half Spanish or half French, or even partly Dutch and Flemish, but the Merry England of tradition—the England that was one and undivided, with its growing freedom of thought, its bows and bills, its nut-brown ale, its sturdy yeomen, and its loyalty to crown and Parliament. She once said, almost as in an agony:

“I love England more than anything!”

And one may really hold that this was true. For England she schemed and planned. For England she gave up many of her royal rights. For England she descended into depths of treachery. For England she left herself on record as an arrant liar, false, perjured, yet successful; and because of her success for England's sake her countrymen will hold her in high remembrance, since her scheming and her falsehood are the offenses that one pardons most readily in a woman.

In the second place, it must be remembered that Elizabeth's courtships and pretended love-makings were almost always a part of her diplomacy. When not a part of her diplomacy

54 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

they were a mere appendage to her vanity. To seem to be the flower of the English people, and to be surrounded by the noblest, the bravest, and the most handsome cavaliers, not only of her own kingdom, but of others—this was, indeed, a choice morsel of which she was fond of tasting, even though it meant nothing beyond the moment.

Finally, though at times she could be very cold, and though she made herself still colder in order that she might play fast and loose with foreign suitors who played fast and loose with her—the King of Spain, the Duc d'Alençon, brother of the French king, with an Austrian archduke, with a magnificent barbarian prince of Muscovy, with Eric of Sweden, or any other Scandinavian suitor—she felt a woman's need for some nearer and more tender association to which she might give freer play and in which she might feel those deeper emotions without the danger that arises when love is mingled with diplomacy.

Let us first consider a picture of the woman as she really was in order that we may understand her triple nature—consummate mistress of every art that statesmen know, and using at every moment her person as a lure; a vain-

glorious queen who seemed to be the prey of boundless vanity; and, lastly, a woman who had all a woman's passion, and who could cast suddenly aside the check and balance which restrained her before the public gaze and could allow herself to give full play to the emotion that she inherited from the king, her father, who was himself a marvel of fire and impetuosity. That the daughter of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn should be a gentle, timid maiden would be to make heredity a farce.

Elizabeth was about twenty-five years of age when she ascended the throne of England. It is odd that the date of her birth cannot be given with precision. The intrigues and disturbances of the English court, and the fact that she was a princess, made her birth a matter of less account than if there had been no male heir to the throne. At any rate, when she ascended it, after the deaths of her brother, King Edward VI., and her sister, Queen Mary, she was a woman well trained both in intellect and in physical development.

Mr. Martin Hume, who loves to dwell upon the later years of Queen Elizabeth, speaks rather bitterly of her as a "painted old haridan"; and such she may well have seemed

56 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

when, at nearly seventy years of age, she leered and grinned a sort of skeleton smile at the handsome young courtiers who pretended to see in her the queen of beauty and to be dying for love of her.

Yet, in her earlier years, when she was young and strong and impetuous, she deserved far different words than these. The portrait of her by Zuccherò, which now hangs in Hampton Court, depicts her when she must have been of more than middle age; and still the face is one of beauty, though it be a strange and almost artificial beauty—one that draws, attracts, and, perhaps, lures you on against your will.

It is interesting to compare this painting with the frank word-picture of a certain German agent who was sent to England by his emperor, and who seems to have been greatly fascinated by Queen Elizabeth. She was at that time in the prime of her beauty and her power. Her complexion was of that peculiar transparency which is seen only in the face of golden blondes. Her figure was fine and graceful, and her wit an accomplishment that would have made a woman of any rank or time remarkable. The German envoy says:

She lives a life of such magnificence and feasting as can hardly be imagined, and occupies a great portion of her time with balls, banquets, hunting, and similar amusements, with the utmost possible display, but nevertheless she insists upon far greater respect being shown her than was exacted by Queen Mary. She summons Parliament, but lets them know that her orders must be obeyed in any case.

If any one will look at the painting by Zuccherro he will see how much is made of Elizabeth's hands—a distinctive feature quite as noble with the Tudors as is the "Hapsburg lip" among the descendants of the house of Austria. These were ungloved, and were very long and white, and she looked at them and played with them a great deal; and, indeed, they justified the admiration with which they were regarded by her flatterers.

Such was the personal appearance of Elizabeth. When a young girl, we have still more favorable opinions of her that were written by those who had occasion to be near her. Not only do they record swift glimpses of her person, but sometimes in a word or two they give an insight into certain traits of mind which came out prominently in her later years.

It may, perhaps, be well to view her as a woman before we regard her more fully as a

58 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

queen. It has been said that Elizabeth inherited many of the traits of her father—the boldness of spirit, the rapidity of decision, and, at the same time, the fox-like craft which often showed itself when it was least expected.

Henry had also, as is well known, a love of the other sex, which has made his reign memorable. And yet it must be noted that while he loved much, it was not loose love. Many a king of England, from Henry II. to Charles II., has offended far more than Henry VIII. Where Henry loved, he married; and it was the unfortunate result of these royal marriages that has made him seem unduly fond of women. If, however, we examine each one of the separate espousals we shall find that he did not enter into it lightly, and that he broke it off unwillingly. His ardent temperament, therefore, was checked by a certain rational or conventional propriety, so that he was by no means a loose liver, as many would make him out to be.

We must remember this when we recall the charges that have been made against Elizabeth, and the strange stories that were told of her tricks—by no means seemly tricks—which she used to play with her guardian, Lord Thomas Seymour. The antics she performed

with him in her dressing-room were made the subject of an official inquiry; yet it came out that while Elizabeth was less than sixteen, and Lord Thomas was very much her senior, his wife was with him on his visits to the chamber of the princess.

Sir Robert Tyrwhitt and his wife were also sent to question her. Tyrwhitt had a keen mind and one well trained to cope with any other's wit in this sort of cross-examination. Elizabeth was only a girl of fifteen, yet she was a match for the accomplished courtier in diplomacy and quick retort. He was sent down to worm out of her everything that she knew. Threats and flattery and forged letters and false confessions were tried on her; but they were tried in vain. She would tell nothing of importance. She denied everything. She sulked, she cried, she availed herself of a woman's favorite defense in suddenly attacking those who had attacked her. She brought counter charges against Tyrwhitt, and put her enemies on their own defense. Not a compromising word could they wring out of her.

She bitterly complained of the imprisonment of her governess, Mrs. Ashley, and cried out:

60 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

"I have not so behaved that you need put more mistresses upon me!"

Altogether, she was too much for Sir Robert, and he was wise enough to recognize her cleverness.

"She hath a very good wit," said he, shrewdly; "and nothing is to be gotten of her except by great policy." And he added: "If I had to say my fancy, I think it more meet that she should have two governesses than one."

Mr. Hume notes the fact that after the two servants of the princess had been examined and had told nothing very serious they found that they had been wise in remaining friends of the royal girl. No sooner had Elizabeth become queen than she knighted the man Parry and made him treasurer of the household, while Mrs. Ashley, the governess, was treated with great consideration. Thus, very naturally, Mr. Hume says: "They had probably kept back far more than they told."

Even Tyrwhitt believed that there was a secret compact between them, for he said, quaintly: "They all sing one song, and she hath set the note for them."

Soon after this her brother Edward's death brought to the throne her elder sister, Mary,

who has harshly become known as Bloody Mary. During this time Elizabeth put aside her boldness, and became apparently a shy and simple-minded virgin. Surrounded on every side by those who sought to trap her, there was nothing in her bearing to make her seem the head of a party or the young chief of a faction. Nothing could exceed her in meekness. She spoke of her sister in the humblest terms. She exhibited no signs of the Tudor animation that was in reality so strong a part of her character.

But, coming to the throne, she threw away her modesty and brawled and rioted with very little self-restraint. The people as a whole found little fault with her. She reminded them of her father, the bluff King Hal; and even those who criticized her did so only partially. They thought much better of her than they had of her saturnine sister, the first Queen Mary.

The life of Elizabeth has been very oddly misunderstood, not so much for the facts in it as for the manner in which these have been arranged and the relation which they have to one another. We ought to recollect that this woman did not live in a restricted sphere, that her life was not a short one, and that it was

crowded with incidents and full of vivid color. Some think of her as living for a short period of time and speak of the great historical characters who surrounded her as belonging to a single epoch. To them she has one set of suitors all the time—the Duc d'Alençon, the King of Denmark's brother, the Prince of Sweden, the Russian potentate, the archduke sending her sweet messages from Austria, the melancholy King of Spain, together with a number of her own brilliant Englishmen—Sir William Pickering, Sir Robert Dudley, Lord Darnley, the Earl of Essex, Sir Philip Sidney, and Sir Walter Raleigh.

Of course, as a matter of fact, Elizabeth lived for nearly seventy years—almost three-quarters of a century—and in that long time there came and went both men and women, those whom she had used and cast aside, with others whom she had also treated with gratitude, and who had died gladly serving her. But through it all there was a continual change in her environment, though not in her. The young soldier went to the battle-field and died; the wise counselor gave her his advice, and she either took it or cared nothing for it. She herself was a curious blending of forwardness and

folly, of wisdom and wantonness, of frivolity and unbridled fancy. But through it all she loved her people, even though she often cheated them and made them pay her taxes in the harsh old way that prevailed before there was any right save the king's will.

At the same time, this was only by fits and starts, and on the whole she served them well. Therefore, to most of them she was always the good Queen Bess. What mattered it to the ditcher and yeoman, far from the court, that the queen was said to dance in her nightdress and to swear like a trooper?

It was, indeed, largely from these rustic sources that such stories were scattered throughout England. Peasants thought them picturesque. More to the point with them were peace and prosperity throughout the country, the fact that law was administered with honesty and justice, and that England was safe from her deadly enemies—the swarthy Spaniards and the scheming French.

But, as I said, we must remember always that the Elizabeth of one period was not the Elizabeth of another, and that the England of one period was not the England of another. As one thinks of it, there is something wonder-

ful in the almost star-like way in which this girl fitted unharmed through a thousand perils. Her own countrymen were at first divided against her; a score of greedy, avaricious suitors sought her destruction, or at least her hand to lead her to destruction; all the great powers of the Continent were either demanding an alliance with England or threatening to dash England down amid their own dissensions.

What had this girl to play off against such dangers? Only an undaunted spirit, a scheming mind that knew no scruples, and finally her own person and the fact that she was a woman, and, therefore, might give herself in marriage and become the mother of a race of kings.

It was this last weapon, the weapon of her sex, that proved, perhaps, the most powerful of all. By promising a marriage or by denying it, or by neither promising nor denying but withholding it, she gave forth a thousand wily intimations which kept those who surrounded her at bay until she had made still another deft and skilful combination, escaping like some startled creature to a new place of safety.

In 1583, when she was fifty years of age, she had reached a point when her courtships and

her pretended love-making were no longer necessary. She had played Sweden against Denmark, and France against Spain, and the Austrian archduke against the others, and many suitors in her own land against the different factions which they headed. She might have sat herself down to rest; for she could feel that her wisdom had led her up into a high place, whence she might look down in peace and with assurance of the tranquillity that she had won. Not yet had the great Armada rolled and thundered toward the English shores. But she was certain that her land was secure, compact, and safe.

It remains to see what were those amatory relations which she may be said to have sincerely held. She had played at love-making with foreign princes, because it was wise and, for the moment, best. She had played with Englishmen of rank who aspired to her hand, because in that way she might conciliate, at one time her Catholic and at another her Protestant subjects. But what of the real and inward feeling of her heart, when she was not thinking of political problems or the necessities of state?

This is an interesting question. One may at

66 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

least seek the answer, hoping thereby to solve one of the most interesting phases of this perplexing and most remarkable woman.

It must be remembered that it was not a question of whether Elizabeth desired marriage. She may have done so as involving a brilliant stroke of policy. In this sense she may have wished to marry one of the two French princes who were among her suitors. But even here she hesitated, and her Parliament disapproved; for by this time England had become largely Protestant. Again, had she married a French prince and had children, England might have become an appanage of France.

There is no particular evidence that she had any feeling at all for her Flemish, Austrian, or Russian suitors, while the Swede's pretensions were the laughing-stock of the English court. So we may set aside this question of marriage as having nothing to do with her emotional life. She did desire a son, as was shown by her passionate outcry when she compared herself with Mary of Scotland.

"The Queen of Scots has a bonny son, while I am but a barren stock!"

She was too wise to wed a subject; though

had she married at all, her choice would doubtless have been an Englishman. In this respect, as in so many others, she was like her father, who chose his numerous wives, with the exception of the first, from among the English ladies of the court; just as the showy Edward IV. was happy in marrying "Dame Elizabeth Woodville." But what a king may do is by no means so easy for a queen; and a husband is almost certain to assume an authority which makes him unpopular with the subjects of his wife.

Hence, as said above, we must consider not so much whom she would have liked to marry, but rather to whom her love went out spontaneously, and not as a part of that amatory play which amused her from the time when she frisked with Seymour down to the very last days, when she could no longer move about, but when she still dabbled her cheeks with rouge and powder and set her skeleton face amid a forest of ruffs.

There were many whom she cared for after a fashion. She would not let Sir Walter Raleigh visit her American colonies, because she could not bear to have him so long away from her. She had great moments of passion for the Earl

68 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

of Essex, though in the end she signed his death-warrant because he was as dominant in spirit as the queen herself.

Readers of Sir Walter Scott's wonderfully picturesque novel, *Kenilworth*, will note how he throws the strongest light upon Elizabeth's affection for Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Scott's historical instinct is united here with a vein of psychology which goes deeper than is usual with him. We see Elizabeth trying hard to share her favor equally between two nobles; but the Earl of Essex fails to please her because he lacked those exquisite manners which made Leicester so great a favorite with the fastidious queen.

Then, too, the story of Leicester's marriage with Amy Robsart is something more than a myth, based upon an obscure legend and an ancient ballad. The earl had had such a wife, and there were sinister stories about the manner of her death. But it is Scott who invents the villainous Varney and the bulldog Anthony Foster; just as he brought the whole episode into the foreground and made it occur at a period much later than was historically true. Still, Scott felt—and he was imbued with the spirit and knowledge of that time—a strong

conviction that Elizabeth loved Leicester as she really loved no one else.

There is one interesting fact which goes far to convince us. Just as her father was, in a way, polygamous, so Elizabeth was even more truly polyandrous. It was inevitable that she should surround herself with attractive men, whose love-locks she would caress and whose flatteries she would greedily accept. To the outward eye there was very little difference in her treatment of the handsome and daring nobles of her court; yet a historian of her time makes one very shrewd remark when he says: "To every one she gave some power at times—to all save Leicester."

Cecil and Walsingham in counsel and Essex and Raleigh in the field might have their own way at times, and even share the sovereign's power, but to Leicester she intrusted no high commands and no important mission. Why so? Simply because she loved him more than any of the rest; and, knowing this, she knew that if besides her love she granted him any measure of control or power, then she would be but half a queen and would be led either to marry him or else to let him sway her as he would.

70 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

For the reason given, one may say with confidence that, while Elizabeth's light loves were fleeting, she gave a deep affection to this handsome, bold, and brilliant Englishman and cherished him in a far different way from any of the others. This was as near as she ever came to marriage, and it was this love at least which makes Shakespeare's famous line as false as it is beautiful, when he describes "the imperial votaress" as passing by "in maiden meditation, fancy free."

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS AND
LORD BOTHWELL

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS AND LORD BOTHWELL

MARY STUART and Cleopatra are the two women who have most attracted the fancy of poets, dramatists, novelists, and painters, from their own time down to the present day.

In some respects there is a certain likeness in their careers. Each was queen of a nation whose affairs were entangled with those of a much greater one. Each sought for her own ideal of love until she found it. Each won that love recklessly, almost madly. Each, in its attainment, fell from power and fortune. Each died before her natural life was ended. One caused the man she loved to cast away the sovereignty of a mighty state. The other lost her own crown in order that she might achieve the whole desire of her heart.

There is still another parallel which may be found. Each of these women was reputed to be exquisitely beautiful; yet each fell short of beauty's highest standards. They are alike remembered in song and story because of quali-

ties that are far more powerful than any physical charm can be. They impressed the imagination of their own contemporaries just as they had impressed the imagination of all succeeding ages, by reason of a strange and irresistible fascination which no one could explain, but which very few could experience and resist.

Mary Stuart was born six days before her father's death, and when the kingdom which was her heritage seemed to be almost in its death-throes. James V. of Scotland, half Stuart and half Tudor, was no ordinary monarch. As a mere boy he had burst the bonds with which a regency had bound him, and he had ruled the wild Scotland of the sixteenth century. He was brave and crafty, keen in statesmanship, and dissolute in pleasure.

His first wife had given him no heirs; so at her death he sought out a princess whom he pursued all the more ardently because she was also courted by the burly Henry VIII. of England. This girl was Marie of Lorraine, daughter of the Duc de Guise. She was fit to be the mother of a lion's brood, for she was above six feet in height and of proportions so ample as to excite the admiration of the royal voluptuary who sat upon the throne of England.

“I am big,” said he, “and I want a wife who is as big as I am.”

But James of Scotland wooed in person, and not by embassies, and he triumphantly carried off his strapping princess. Henry of England gnawed his beard in vain; and, though in time he found consolation in another woman’s arms, he viewed James not only as a public but as a private enemy.

There was war between the two countries. First the Scots repelled an English army; but soon they were themselves disgracefully defeated at Solway Moss by a force much their inferior in numbers. The shame of it broke King James’s heart. As he was galloping from the battle-field the news was brought him that his wife had given birth to a daughter. He took little notice of the message; and in a few days he had died, moaning with his last breath the mysterious words:

“It came with a lass—with a lass it will go!”

The child who was born at this ill-omened crisis was Mary Stuart, who within a week became, in her own right, Queen of Scotland. Her mother acted as regent of the kingdom. Henry of England demanded that the infant girl should be betrothed to his young son, Prince

Edward, who afterward reigned as Edward VI., though he died while still a boy. The proposal was rejected, and the war between England and Scotland went on its bloody course; but meanwhile the little queen was sent to France, her mother's home, so that she might be trained in accomplishments which were rare in Scotland.

In France she grew up at the court of Catherine de' Medici, that imperious intriguer whose splendid surroundings were tainted with the corruption which she had brought from her native Italy. It was, indeed, a singular training-school for a girl of Mary Stuart's character. She saw about her a superficial chivalry and a most profound depravity. Poets like Ronsard graced the life of the court with exquisite verse. Troubadours and minstrels sang sweet music there. There were fêtes and tournaments and gallantry of bearing; yet, on the other hand, there was every possible refinement and variety of vice. Men were slain before the eyes of the queen herself. The talk of the court was of intrigue and lust and evil things which often verged on crime. Catherine de' Medici herself kept her nominal husband at arm's-length; and in order to maintain her grasp on France she

connived at the corruption of her own children, three of whom were destined in their turn to sit upon the throne.

Mary Stuart grew up in these surroundings until she was sixteen, eating the fruit which gave a knowledge of both good and evil. Her intelligence was very great. She quickly learned Italian, French, and Latin. She was a daring horsewoman. She was a poet and an artist even in her teens. She was also a keen judge of human motives, for those early years of hers had forced her into a womanhood that was premature but wonderful. It had been proposed that she should marry the eldest son of Catherine, so that in time the kingdom of Scotland and that of France might be united, while if Elizabeth of England were to die unmarried her realm also would fall to this pair of children.

And so Mary, at sixteen, wedded the Dauphin Francis, who was a year her junior. The prince was a wretched, whimpering little creature, with a cankered body and a blighted soul. Marriage with such a husband seemed absurd. It never was a marriage in reality. The sickly child would cry all night, for he suffered from abscesses in his ears, and his manhood had been

78 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

prematurely taken from him. Nevertheless, within a twelvemonth the French king died and Mary Stuart was Queen of France as well as of Scotland, hampered only by her nominal obedience to the sick boy whom she openly despised. At seventeen she showed herself a master spirit. She held her own against the ambitious Catherine de' Medici, whom she contemptuously nicknamed "the apothecary's daughter." For the brief period of a year she was actually the ruler of France; but then her husband died and she was left a widow, restless, ambitious, and yet no longer having any of the power she loved.

Mary Stuart at this time had become a woman whose fascination was exerted over all who knew her. She was very tall and very slim, with chestnut hair, "like a flower of the heat, both lax and delicate." Her skin was fair and pale, so clear and so transparent as to make the story plausible that when she drank from a flask of wine, the red liquid could be seen passing down her slender throat.

Yet with all this she was not fine in texture, but hardy as a man. She could endure immense fatigue without yielding to it. Her supple form had the strength of steel. There was a gleam in

her hazel eyes that showed her to be brimful of an almost fierce vitality. Young as she was, she was the mistress of a thousand arts, and she exhaled a sort of atmosphere that turned the heads of men. The Stuart blood made her impatient of control, careless of state, and easy-mannered. The French and the Tudor strain gave her vivacity. She could be submissive in appearance while still persisting in her aims. She could be languorous and seductive while cold within. Again, she could assume the haughtiness which belonged to one who was twice a queen.

Two motives swayed her, and they fought together for supremacy. One was the love of power, and the other was the love of love. The first was natural to a girl who was a sovereign in her own right. The second was inherited, and was then forced into a rank luxuriance by the sort of life that she had seen about her. At eighteen she was a strangely amorous creature, given to fondling and kissing every one about her, with slight discrimination. From her sense of touch she received emotions that were almost necessary to her existence. With her slender, graceful hands she was always stroking the face of some favorite—it might be only the face

80 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

of a child, or it might be the face of some courtier or poet, or one of the four Marys whose names are linked with hers—Mary Livingstone, Mary Fleming, Mary Beaton, and Mary Seton, the last of whom remained with her royal mistress until her death.

But one must not be too censorious in thinking of Mary Stuart. She was surrounded everywhere by enemies. During her stay in France she was hated by the faction of Catherine de' Medici. When she returned to Scotland she was hated because of her religion by the Protestant lords. Her every action was set forth in the worst possible light. The most sinister meaning was given to everything she said or did. In truth, we must reject almost all the stories which accuse her of anything more than a certain levity of conduct.

She was not a woman to yield herself in love's last surrender unless her intellect and heart alike had been made captive. She would listen to the passionate outpourings of poets and courtiers, and she would plunge her eyes into theirs, and let her hair just touch their faces, and give them her white hands to kiss—but that was all. Even in this she was only following the fashion of the court where she

was bred, and she was not unlike her royal relative, Elizabeth of England, who had the same external amorousness coupled with the same internal self-control.

Mary Stuart's love life makes a piteous story, for it is the life of one who was ever seeking—seeking for the man to whom she could look up, who could be strong and brave and ardent like herself, and at the same time be more powerful and more steadfast even than she herself in mind and thought. Whatever may be said of her, and howsoever the facts may be colored by partisans, this royal girl, stung though she was by passion and goaded by desire, cared nothing for any man who could not match her in body and mind and spirit all at once.

It was in her early widowhood that she first met the man, and when their union came it brought ruin on them both. In France there came to her one day one of her own subjects, the Earl of Bothwell. He was but a few years older than she, and in his presence for the first time she felt, in her own despite, that profoundly moving, indescribable, and never-to-be-forgotten thrill which shakes a woman to the very center of her being, since it is the recognition of a complete affinity.

82 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

Lord Bothwell, like Queen Mary, has been terribly maligned. Unlike her, he has found only a few defenders. Maurice Hewlett has drawn a picture of him more favorable than many, and yet it is a picture that repels. Bothwell, says he, was of a type esteemed by those who pronounce vice to be their virtue. He was "a galliard, flushed with rich blood, broad-shouldered, square-jawed, with a laugh so happy and so prompt that the world, rejoicing to hear it, thought all must be well wherever he might be. He wore brave clothes, sat a brave horse, and kept brave company bravely. His high color, while it betokened high feeding, got him the credit of good health. His little eyes twinkled so merrily that you did not see they were like a pig's, sly and greedy at once, and bloodshot. His tawny beard concealed a jaw underhung, a chin jutting and dangerous. His mouth had a cruel twist; but his laughing hid that too. The bridge of his nose had been broken; few observed it, or guessed at the brawl which must have given it to him. Frankness was his great charm, careless ease in high places."

And so, when Mary Stuart first met him in her eighteenth year, Lord Bothwell made her

think as she had never thought of any other man, and as she was not to think of any other man again. She grew to look eagerly for the frank mockery "in those twinkling eyes, in that quick mouth"; and to wonder whether it was with him always—asleep, at prayers, fighting, furious, or in love.

Something more, however, must be said of Bothwell. He was undoubtedly a roisterer, but he was very much a man. He made easy love to women. His sword leaped quickly from its sheath. He could fight, and he could also think. He was no brawling ruffian, no ordinary rake. Remembering what Scotland was in those days, Bothwell might well seem in reality a princely figure. He knew Italian; he was at home in French; he could write fluent Latin. He was a collector of books and a reader of them also. He was perhaps the only Scottish noble of his time who had a book-plate of his own. Here is something more than a mere reveler. Here is a man of varied accomplishments and of a complex character.

Though he stayed but a short time near the queen in France, he kindled her imagination, so that when she seriously thought of men she thought of Bothwell. And yet all the time she

84 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

was fondling the young pages in her retinue and kissing her maids of honor with her scarlet lips, and lying on their knees, while poets like Ronsard and Chastelard wrote ardent love sonnets to her and sighed and pined for something more than the privilege of kissing her two dainty hands.

In 1561, less than a year after her widowhood, Mary set sail for Scotland, never to return. The great high-decked ships which escorted her sailed into the harbor of Leith, and she pressed on to Edinburgh. A depressing change indeed from the sunny terraces and fields of France! In her own realm were fog and rain and only a hut to shelter her upon her landing. When she reached her capital there were few welcoming cheers; but as she rode over the cobblestones to Holyrood, the squalid wynds vomited forth great mobs of hard-featured, grim-visaged men and women who stared with curiosity and a half-contempt at the girl queen and her retinue of foreigners.

The Scots were Protestants of the most dour sort, and they distrusted their new ruler because of her religion and because she loved to surround herself with dainty things and bright colors and exotic elegance. They feared lest

she should try to repeal the law of Scotland's Parliament which had made the country Protestant.

The very indifference of her subjects stirred up the nobler part of Mary's nature. For a time she was indeed a queen. She governed wisely. She respected the religious rights of her Protestant subjects. She strove to bring order out of the chaos into which her country had fallen. And she met with some success. The time came when her people cheered her as she rode among them. Her subtle fascination was her greatest source of strength. Even John Knox, that iron-visaged, stentorian preacher, fell for a time under the charm of her presence. She met him frankly and pleaded with him as a woman, instead of commanding him as a queen. The surly ranter became softened for a time, and, though he spoke of her to others as "Honeypot," he ruled his tongue in public. She had offers of marriage from Austrian and Spanish princes. The new King of France, her brother-in-law, would perhaps have wedded her. It mattered little to Mary that Elizabeth of England was hostile. She felt that she was strong enough to hold her own and govern Scotland.

86 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

But who could govern a country such as Scotland was? It was a land of broils and feuds, of clan enmities and fierce vendettas. Its nobles were half barbarous, and they fought and slashed at one another with drawn dirks almost in the presence of the queen herself. No matter whom she favored, there rose up a swarm of enemies. Here was a Corsica of the north, more savage and untamed than even the other Corsica.

In her perplexity Mary felt a woman's need of some man on whom she would have the right to lean, and whom she could make king consort. She thought that she had found him in the person of her cousin, Lord Darnley, a Catholic, and by his upbringing half an Englishman. Darnley came to Scotland, and for the moment Mary fancied that she had forgotten Bothwell. Here again she was in love with love, and she idealized the man who came to give it to her. Darnley seemed, indeed, well worthy to be loved, for he was tall and handsome, appearing well on horseback and having some of the accomplishments which Mary valued.

It was a hasty wooing, and the queen herself was first of all the wooer. Her quick imagination saw in Darnley traits and gifts of which

he really had no share. Therefore, the marriage was soon concluded, and Scotland had two sovereigns, King Henry and Queen Mary. So sure was Mary of her indifference to Bothwell that she urged the earl to marry, and he did marry a girl of the great house of Gordon.

Mary's self-suggested love for Darnley was extinguished almost on her wedding-night. The man was a drunkard who came into her presence befuddled and almost bestial. He had no brains. His vanity was enormous. He loved no one but himself, and least of all this queen, whom he regarded as having thrown herself at his empty head.

The first-fruits of the marriage were uprisings among the Protestant lords. Mary then showed herself a heroic queen. At the head of a motley band of soldiery who came at her call—half-clad, uncouth, and savage—she rode into the west, sleeping at night upon the bare ground, sharing the camp food, dressed in plain tartan, but swift and fierce as any eagle. Her spirit ran like fire through the veins of those who followed her. She crushed the insurrection, scattered its leaders, and returned in triumph to her capital.

Now she was really queen, but here came in

the other motive which was interwoven in her character. She had shown herself a man in courage. Should she not have the pleasures of a woman? To her court in Holyrood came Bothwell once again, and this time Mary knew that he was all the world to her. Darnley had shrunk from the hardships of battle. He was steeped in low intrigues. He roused the constant irritation of the queen by his folly and utter lack of sense and decency. Mary felt she owed him nothing, but she forgot that she owed much to herself.

Her old amorous ways came back to her, and she relapsed into the joys of sense. The scandal-mongers of the capital saw a lover in every man with whom she talked. She did, in fact, set convention at defiance. She dressed in men's clothing. She showed what the unemotional Scots thought to be unseemly levity. The French poet, Chastelard, misled by her external signs of favor, believed himself to be her choice. At the end of one mad revel he was found secreted beneath her bed, and was driven out by force. A second time he ventured to secrete himself within the covers of the bed. Then he was dragged forth, imprisoned, and condemned to death. He met his fate without

a murmur, save at the last when he stood upon the scaffold and, gazing toward the palace, cried in French :

“Oh, cruel queen! I die for you!”

Another favorite, the Italian, David Rizzio, or Riccio, in like manner wrote love verses to the queen, and she replied to them in kind; but there is no evidence that she valued him save for his ability, which was very great. She made him her foreign secretary, and the man whom he supplanted worked on the jealousy of Darnley; so that one night, while Mary and Rizzio were at dinner in a small private chamber, Darnley and the others broke in upon her. Darnley held her by the waist while Rizzio was stabbed before her eyes with a cruelty the greater because the queen was soon to become a mother.

From that moment she hated Darnley as one would hate a snake. She tolerated him only that he might acknowledge her child as his son. This child was the future James VI. of Scotland and James I. of England. It is recorded of him that never throughout his life could he bear to look upon drawn steel.

After this Mary summoned Bothwell again and again. It was revealed to her as in a blaze

90 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

of light that, after all, he was the one and only man who could be everything to her. His frankness, his cynicism, his mockery, his carelessness, his courage, and the power of his mind matched her moods completely. She threw away all semblance of concealment. She ignored the fact that he had married at her wish. She was queen. She desired him. She must have him at any cost.

“Though I lose Scotland and England both,” she cried in a passion of abandonment, “I shall have him for my own!”

Bothwell, in his turn, was nothing loath, and they leaped at each other like two flames.

It was then that Mary wrote those letters which were afterward discovered in a casket and which were used against her when she was on trial for her life. These so-called Casket Letters, though we have not now the originals, are among the most extraordinary letters ever written. All shame, all hesitation, all innocence, are flung away in them. The writer is so fired with passion that each sentence is like a cry to a lover in the dark. As De Peyster says: “In them the animal instincts override and spur and lash the pen.” Mary was committing to paper the frenzied madness of a woman con-

sumed to her very marrow by the scorching blaze of unedurable desire.

Events moved quickly. Darnley, convalescent from an attack of smallpox, was mysteriously destroyed by an explosion of gunpowder. Bothwell was divorced from his young wife on curious grounds. A dispensation allowed Mary to wed a Protestant, and she married Bothwell three months after Darnley's death.

Here one sees the consummation of what had begun many years before in France. From the moment that she and Bothwell met, their union was inevitable. Seas could not sunder them. Other loves and other fancies were as nothing to them. Even the bonds of marriage were burst asunder so that these two fiery, panting souls could meet.

It was the irony of fate that when they had so met it was only to be parted. Mary's subjects, outraged by her conduct, rose against her. As she passed through the streets of Edinburgh the women hurled after her indecent names. Great banners were raised with execrable daubs representing the murdered Darnley. The short and dreadful monosyllable which is familiar to us in the pages of the Bible was hurled after her wherever she went.

With Bothwell by her side she led a wild and ragged horde of followers against the rebellious nobles, whose forces met her at Carberry Hill. Her motley followers melted away, and Mary surrendered to the hostile chieftains, who took her to the castle at Lochleven. There she became the mother of twins—a fact that is seldom mentioned by historians. These children were the fruit of her union with Bothwell. From this time forth she cared but little for herself, and she signed, without great reluctance, a document by which she abdicated in favor of her infant son.

Even in this place of imprisonment, however, her fascination had power to charm. Among those who guarded her, two of the Douglas family—George Douglas and William Douglas—for love of her, effected her escape. The first attempt failed. Mary, disguised as a laundress, was betrayed by the delicacy of her hands. But a second attempt was successful. The queen passed through a postern gate and made her way to the lake, where George Douglas met her with a boat. Crossing the lake, fifty horsemen under Lord Claude Hamilton gave her their escort and bore her away in safety.

But Mary was sick of Scotland, for Bothwell

could not be there. She had tasted all the bitterness of life, and for a few months all the sweetness; but she would have no more of this rough and barbarous country. Of her own free will she crossed the Solway into England, to find herself at once a prisoner.

Never again did she set eyes on Bothwell. After the battle of Carberry Hill he escaped to the north, gathered some ships together, and preyed upon English merchantmen, very much as a pirate might have done. Ere long, however, when he had learned of Mary's fate, he set sail for Norway. King Frederick of Denmark made him a prisoner of state. He was not confined within prison walls, however, but was allowed to hunt and ride in the vicinity of Malmo Castle and of Dragsholm. It is probably in Malmo Castle that he died. In 1858 a coffin which was thought to be the coffin of the earl was opened, and a Danish artist sketched the head—which corresponds quite well with the other portraits of the ill-fated Scottish noble.

It is a sad story. Had Mary been less ambitious when she first met Bothwell, or had he been a little bolder, they might have reigned together and lived out their lives in the pleni-

94 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

tude of that great love which held them both in thrall. But a queen is not as other women; and she found too late that the teaching of her heart was, after all, the truest teaching. She went to her death as Bothwell went to his, alone, in a strange, unfriendly land.

Yet, even this, perhaps, was better so. It has at least touched both their lives with pathos and has made the name of Mary Stuart one to be remembered throughout all the ages.

QUEEN CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN
AND THE
MARQUIS MONALDESCHI

QUEEN CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN AND THE MARQUIS MONALDESCHI

SWEDEN to-day is one of the peaceful kingdoms of the world, whose people are prosperous, well governed, and somewhat apart from the clash and turmoil of other states and nations. Even the secession of Norway, a few years ago, was accomplished without bloodshed, and now the two kingdoms exist side by side as free from strife as they are with Denmark, which once domineered and tyrannized over both.

It is difficult to believe that long ago, in the Middle Ages, the cities of southern Sweden were among the great commercial centers of the world. Stockholm and Lund ranked with London and Paris. They absorbed the commerce of the northern seas, and were the admiration of thousands of travelers and merchants who passed through them and trafficked with them.

Much nearer to our own time, Sweden was the great military power of northern Europe.

98 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

The ambassadors of the Swedish kings were received with the utmost deference in every court. Her soldiers won great battles and ended mighty wars. The England of Cromwell and Charles II. was unimportant and isolated in comparison with this northern kingdom, which could pour forth armies of gigantic blond warriors, headed by generals astute as well as brave.

It was no small matter, then, in 1626, that the loyal Swedes were hoping that their queen would give birth to a male heir to succeed his splendid father, Gustavus Adolphus, ranked by military historians as one of the six great generals whom the world had so far produced. The queen, a German princess of Brandenburg, had already borne two daughters, who died in infancy. The expectation was wide-spread and intense that she should now become the mother of a son; and the king himself was no less anxious.

When the event occurred, the child was seen to be completely covered with hair, and for this reason the attendants at first believed that it was the desired boy. When their mistake was discovered they were afraid to tell the king, who was waiting in his study for the announce-

ment to be made. At last, when no one else would go to him, his sister, the Princess Caroline, volunteered to break the news.

Gustavus was in truth a chivalrous, high-bred monarch. Though he must have been disappointed at the advent of a daughter, he showed no sign of dissatisfaction or even of surprise; but, rising, he embraced his sister, saying:

"Let us thank God. I hope this girl will be as good as a boy to me. May God preserve her now that He has sent her!"

It is customary at almost all courts to pay less attention to the birth of a princess than to that of a prince; but Gustavus displayed his chivalry toward this little daughter, whom he named Christina. He ordered that the full royal salute should be fired in every fortress of his kingdom and that displays of fireworks, balls of honor, and court functions should take place; "for," as he said, "this is the heir to my throne." And so from the first he took his child under his own keeping and treated her as if she were a much-loved son as well as a successor.

He joked about her looks when she was born, when she was mistaken for a boy.

"She will be clever," he said, "for she has taken us all in!"

The Swedish people were as delighted with their little princess as were the people of Holland when the present Queen Wilhelmina was born, to carry on the succession of the House of Orange. On one occasion the king and the small Christina, who were inseparable companions, happened to approach a fortress where they expected to spend the night. The commander of the castle was bound to fire a royal salute of fifty cannon in honor of his sovereign; yet he dreaded the effect upon the princess of such a roaring and bellowing of artillery. He therefore sent a swift horseman to meet the royal party at a distance and explain his perplexity. Should he fire these guns or not? Would the king give an order?

Gustavus thought for a moment, and then replied:

“My daughter is the daughter of a soldier, and she must learn to lead a soldier’s life. Let the guns be fired!”

The procession moved on. Presently fire spurted from the embrasures of the fort, and its batteries thundered in one great roar. The king looked down at Christina. Her face was aglow with pleasure and excitement; she clapped her hands and laughed, and cried out:

QUEEN CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN 101

“More bang! More! More! More!”

This is only one of a score of stories that were circulated about the princess, and the Swedes were more and more delighted with the girl who was to be their queen.

Somewhat curiously, Christina's mother, Queen Maria, cared little for the child, and, in fact, came at last to detest her almost as much as the king loved her. It is hard to explain this dislike. Perhaps she had a morbid desire for a son and begrudged the honors given to a daughter. Perhaps she was a little jealous of her own child, who took so much of the king's attention. Afterward, in writing of her mother, Christina excuses her, and says quite frankly:

She could not bear to see me, because I was a girl, and an ugly girl at that. And she was right enough, for I was as tawny as a little Turk.

This candid description of herself is hardly just. Christina was never beautiful, and she had a harsh voice. She was apt to be overbearing even as a little girl. Yet she was a most interesting child, with an expressive face, large eyes, an aquiline nose, and the blond hair of her people. There was nothing in this to account for her mother's intense dislike for her.

102 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

It was currently reported at the time that attempts were made to maim or seriously injure the little princess. By what was made to seem an accident, she would be dropped upon the floor, and heavy articles of furniture would somehow manage to strike her. More than once a great beam fell mysteriously close to her, either in the palace or while she was passing through the streets. None of these things did her serious harm, however. Most of them she luckily escaped; but when she had grown to be a woman one of her shoulders was permanently higher than the other.

"I suppose," said Christina, "that I could be straightened if I would let the surgeons attend to it; but it isn't worth while to take the trouble."

When Christina was four, Sweden became involved in the great war that had been raging for a dozen years between the Protestant and the Catholic states of Germany. Gradually the neighboring powers had been drawn into the struggle, either to serve their own ends or to support the faith to which they adhered. Gustavus Adolphus took up the sword with mixed motives, for he was full of enthusiasm for the imperiled cause of the Reformation, and at the

same time he deemed it a favorable opportunity to assert his control over the shores of the Baltic.

The warrior king summoned his army and prepared to invade Germany. Before departing he took his little daughter by the hand and led her among the assembled nobles and councilors of state. To them he intrusted the princess, making them kneel and vow that they would regard her as his heir, and, if aught should happen to him, as his successor. Amid the clashing of swords and the clang of armor this vow was taken, and the king went forth to war.

He met the ablest generals of his enemies, and the fortunes of battle swayed hither and thither; but the climax came when his soldiers encountered those of Wallenstein—that strange, overbearing, arrogant, mysterious creature whom many regarded with a sort of awe. The clash came at Lützen, in Saxony. The Swedish king fought long and hard, and so did his mighty opponent; but at last, in the very midst of a tremendous onset that swept all before him, Gustavus received a mortal wound and died, even while Wallenstein was fleeing from the field of battle.

104 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

The battle of Lützen made Christina Queen of Sweden at the age of six. Of course, she could not yet be crowned, but a council of able ministers continued the policy of the late king and taught the young queen her first lessons in statecraft. Her intellect soon showed itself as more than that of a child. She understood all that was taking place, and all that was planned and arranged. Her tact was unusual. Her discretion was admired by every one; and after a while she had the advice and training of the great Swedish chancellor, Oxenstierna, whose wisdom she shared to a remarkable degree.

Before she was sixteen she had so approved herself to her counselors, and especially to the people at large, that there was a wide-spread clamor that she should take the throne and govern in her own person. To this she gave no heed, but said:

“I am not yet ready.”

All this time she bore herself like a king. There was nothing distinctly feminine about her. She took but slight interest in her appearance. She wore sword and armor in the presence of her troops, and often she dressed entirely in men's clothes. She would take long,

lonely gallops through the forests, brooding over problems of state and feeling no fatigue or fear. And indeed why should she fear, who was beloved by all her subjects?

When her eighteenth year arrived, the demand for her coronation was impossible to resist. All Sweden wished to see a ruling queen, who might marry and have children to succeed her through the royal line of her great father. Christina consented to be crowned, but she absolutely refused all thought of marriage. She had more suitors from all parts of Europe than even Elizabeth of England; but, unlike Elizabeth, she did not dally with them, give them false hopes, or use them for the political advantage of her kingdom.

At that time Sweden was stronger than England, and was so situated as to be independent of alliances. So Christina said, in her harsh, peremptory voice:

“I shall never marry; and why should you speak of my having children? I am just as likely to give birth to a Nero as to an Augustus.”

Having assumed the throne, she ruled with a strictness of government such as Sweden had not known before. She took the reins of state

into her own hands and carried out a foreign policy of her own, over the heads of her ministers, and even against the wishes of her people. The fighting upon the Continent had dragged out to a weary length, but the Swedes, on the whole, had scored a marked advantage. For this reason the war was popular, and every one wished it to go on; but Christina, of her own will, decided that it must stop, that mere glory was not to be considered against material advantages. Sweden had had enough of glory; she must now look to her enrichment and prosperity through the channels of peace.

Therefore, in 1648, against Oxenstierna, against her generals, and against her people, she exercised her royal power and brought the Thirty Years' War to an end by the so-called Peace of Westphalia. At this time she was twenty-two, and by her personal influence she had ended one of the greatest struggles of history. Nor had she done it to her country's loss. Denmark yielded up rich provinces, while Germany was compelled to grant Sweden membership in the German diet.

Then came a period of immense prosperity through commerce, through economies in government, through the improvement of agricul-

ture and the opening of mines. This girl queen, without intrigue, without descending from her native nobility to peep and whisper with shady diplomats, showed herself in reality a great monarch, a true Semiramis of the north, more worthy of respect and reverence than Elizabeth of England. She was highly trained in many arts. She was fond of study, spoke Latin fluently, and could argue with Salmasius, Descartes, and other accomplished scholars without showing any inferiority to them.

She gathered at her court distinguished persons from all countries. She repelled those who sought her hand, and she was pure and truthful and worthy of all men's admiration. Had she died at this time history would rank her with the greatest of women sovereigns. Naudé, the librarian of Cardinal Mazarin, wrote of her to the scientist Gassendi in these words:

To say truth, I am sometimes afraid lest the common saying should be verified in her, that short is the life and rare the old age of those who surpass the common limits. Do not imagine that she is learned only in books, for she is equally so in painting, architecture, sculpture, medals, antiquities, and all curiosities. There is not a cunning workman in these arts but she has him fetched. There are as good workers in wax and in enamel, engravers, singers, players, dancers here as will be found anywhere.

108 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

She has a gallery of statues, bronze and marble, medals of gold, silver, and bronze, pieces of ivory, amber, coral, worked crystal, steel mirrors, clocks and tables, bas-reliefs and other things of the kind; richer I have never seen even in Italy; finally, a great quantity of pictures. In short, her mind is open to all impressions.

But after she began to make her court a sort of home for art and letters it ceased to be the sort of court that Sweden was prepared for. Christina's subjects were still rude and lacking in accomplishments; therefore she had to summon men of genius from other countries, especially from France and Italy. Many of these were illustrious artists or scholars, but among them were also some who used their mental gifts for harm.

Among these latter was a French physician named Bourdelot—a man of keen intellect, of winning manners, and of a profound cynicism, which was not apparent on the surface, but the effect of which last lasting. To Bourdelot we must chiefly ascribe the mysterious change which gradually came over Queen Christina. With his associates he taught her a distaste for the simple and healthy life that she had been accustomed to lead. She ceased to think of the welfare of the state and began to look down

with scorn upon her unsophisticated Swedes. Foreign luxury displayed itself at Stockholm, and her palaces overflowed with beautiful things.

By subtle means Bourdelot undermined her principles. Having been a Stoic, she now became an Epicurean. She was by nature devoid of sentiment. She would not spend her time in the niceties of love-making, as did Elizabeth; but beneath the surface she had a sort of tigerish, passionate nature, which would break forth at intervals, and which demanded satisfaction from a series of favorites. It is probable that Bourdelot was her first lover, but there were many others whose names are recorded in the annals of the time.

When she threw aside her virtue Christina ceased to care about appearances. She squandered her revenues upon her favorites. What she retained of her former self was a carelessness that braved the opinion of her subjects. She dressed almost without thought, and it is said that she combed her hair not more than twice a month. She caroused with male companions to the scandal of her people, and she swore like a trooper when displeased.

Christina's philosophy of life appears to

have been compounded of an almost brutal licentiousness, a strong love of power, and a strange, freakish longing for something new. Her political ambitions were checked by the rising discontent of her people, who began to look down upon her and to feel ashamed of her shame. Knowing herself as she did, she did not care to marry.

Yet Sweden must have an heir. Therefore she chose out her cousin Charles, declared that he was to be her successor, and finally caused him to be proclaimed as such before the assembled estates of the realm. She even had him crowned; and finally, in her twenty-eighth year, she abdicated altogether and prepared to leave Sweden. When asked whither she would go, she replied in a Latin quotation:

“The Fates will show the way.”

In her act of abdication she reserved to herself the revenues of some of the richest provinces in Sweden and absolute power over such of her subjects as should accompany her. They were to be her subjects until the end.

The Swedes remembered that Christina was the daughter of their greatest king, and that, apart from personal scandals, she had ruled them well; and so they let her go regretfully

and accepted her cousin as their king. Christina, on her side, went joyfully and in the spirit of a grand adventuress. With a numerous suite she entered Germany, and then stayed for a year at Brussels, where she renounced Lutheranism. After this she traveled slowly into Italy, where she entered Rome on horseback, and was received by the Pope, Alexander VII., who lodged her in a magnificent palace, accepted her conversion, and baptized her, giving her a new name, Alexandra.

In Rome she was a brilliant but erratic personage, living sumptuously, even though her revenues from Sweden came in slowly, partly because the Swedes disliked her change of religion. She was surrounded by men of letters, with whom she amused herself, and she took to herself a lover, the Marquis Monaldeschi. She thought that at last she had really found her true affinity, while Monaldeschi believed that he could count on the queen's fidelity.

He was in attendance upon her daily, and they were almost inseparable. He swore allegiance to her and thereby made himself one of the subjects over whom she had absolute power. For a time he was the master of those intense

emotions which, in her, alternated with moods of coldness and even cruelty.

Monaldeschi was a handsome Italian, who bore himself with a fine air of breeding. He understood the art of charming, but he did not know that beyond a certain time no one could hold the affections of Christina.

However, after she had quarreled with various cardinals and decided to leave Rome for a while, Monaldeschi accompanied her to France, where she had an immense vogue at the court of Louis XIV. She attracted wide attention because of her eccentricity and utter lack of manners. It gave her the greatest delight to criticize the ladies of the French court—their looks, their gowns, and their jewels. They, in return, would speak of Christina's deformed shoulder and skinny frame; but the king was very gracious to her and invited her to his hunting-palace at Fontainebleau.

While she had been winning triumphs of sarcasm the infatuated Monaldeschi had gradually come to suspect, and then to know, that his royal mistress was no longer true to him. He had been supplanted in her favor by another Italian, one Sentanelli, who was the captain of her guard.

Monaldeschi took a tortuous and roundabout revenge. He did not let the queen know of his discovery; nor did he, like a man, send a challenge to Sentanelli. Instead he began by betraying her secrets to Oliver Cromwell, with whom she had tried to establish a correspondence. Again, imitating the hand and seal of Sentanelli, he set in circulation a series of the most scandalous and insulting letters about Christina. By this treacherous trick he hoped to end the relations between his rival and the queen; but when the letters were carried to Christina she instantly recognized their true source. She saw that she was betrayed by her former favorite and that he had taken a revenge which might seriously compromise her.

This led to a tragedy, of which the facts were long obscure. They were carefully recorded, however, by the queen's household chaplain, Father Le Bel; and there is also a narrative written by one Marco Antonio Conti, which confirms the story. Both were published privately in 1865, with notes by Louis Lacour.

The narration of the priest is dreadful in its simplicity and minuteness of detail. It may be summed up briefly here, because it is the testimony of an eye-witness who knew Christina.

Christina, with the marquis and a large retinue, was at Fontainebleau in November, 1657. A little after midnight, when all was still, the priest, Father Le Bel, was aroused and ordered to go at once to the Galerie des Cerfs, or Hall of Stags, in another part of the palace. When he asked why, he was told:

“It is by the order of her majesty the Swedish queen.”

The priest, wondering, hurried on his garments. On reaching the gloomy hall he saw the Marquis Monaldeschi, evidently in great agitation, and at the end of the corridor the queen in somber robes. Beside the queen, as if awaiting orders, stood three figures, who could with some difficulty be made out as three soldiers of her guard.

The queen motioned to Father Le Bel and asked him for a packet which she had given him for safe-keeping some little time before. He gave it to her, and she opened it. In it were letters and other documents, which, with a steely glance, she displayed to Monaldeschi. He was confused by the sight of them and by the incisive words in which Christina showed how he had both insulted her and had tried to shift the blame upon Sentanelli.

QUEEN CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN 115

Monaldeschi broke down completely. He fell at the queen's feet and wept piteously, begging for pardon, only to be met by the cold answer:

"You are my subject and a traitor to me. Marquis, you must prepare to die!"

Then she turned away and left the hall, in spite of the cries of Monaldeschi, to whom she merely added the advice that he should make his peace with God by confessing to Father Le Bel.

After she had gone the marquis fell into a torrent of self-exculpation and cried for mercy. The three armed men drew near and urged him to confess for the good of his soul. They seemed to have no malice against him, but to feel that they must obey the orders given them. At the frantic urging of the marquis their leader even went to the queen to ask whether she would relent; but he returned shaking his head, and said:

"Marquis, you must die."

Father Le Bel undertook a like mission, but returned with the message that there was no hope. So the marquis made his confession in French and Latin, but even then he hoped; for he did not wait to receive absolution, but begged still further for delay or pardon.

Then the three armed men approached, having drawn their swords. The absolution was pronounced; and, following it, one of the guards slashed the marquis across the forehead. He stumbled and fell forward, making signs as if to ask that he might have his throat cut. But his throat was partly protected by a coat of mail, so that three or four strokes delivered there had slight effect. Finally, however, a long, narrow sword was thrust into his side, after which the marquis made no sound.

Father Le Bel at once left the Galerie des Cerfs and went into the queen's apartment, with the smell of blood in his nostrils. He found her calm and ready to justify herself. Was she not still queen over all who had voluntarily become members of her suite? This had been agreed to in her act of abdication. Wherever she set her foot, there, over her own, she was still a monarch, with full power to punish traitors at her will. This power she had exercised, and with justice. What mattered it that she was in France? She was queen as truly as Louis XIV. was king.

The story was not long in getting out, but the truth was not wholly known until a much later day. It was said that Sentanelli had slapped

the marquis in a fit of jealousy, though some added that it was done with the connivance of the queen. King Louis, the incarnation of absolutism, knew the truth, but he was slow to act. He sympathized with the theory of Christina's sovereignty. It was only after a time that word was sent to Christina that she must leave Fontainebleau. She took no notice of the order until it suited her convenience, and then she went forth with all the honors of a reigning monarch.

This was the most striking episode in all the strange story of her private life. When her cousin Charles, whom she had made king, died without an heir she sought to recover her crown; but the estates of the realm refused her claim, reduced her income, and imposed restraints upon her power. She then sought the vacant throne of Poland; but the Polish nobles, who desired a weak ruler for their own purposes, made another choice. So at last she returned to Rome, where the Pope received her with a splendid procession and granted her twelve thousand crowns a year to make up for her lessened Swedish revenue.

From this time she lived a life which she made interesting by her patronage of learning

118 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

and exciting by her rather unseemly quarrels with cardinals and even with the Pope. Her armed retinue marched through the streets with drawn swords and gave open protection to criminals who had taken refuge with her. She dared to criticize the pontiff, who merely smiled and said:

“She is a woman!”

On the whole, the end of her life was pleasant. She was much admired for her sagacity in politics. Her words were listened to at every court in Europe. She annotated the classics, she made beautiful collections, and she was regarded as a privileged person whose acts no one took amiss. She died at fifty-three, and was buried in St. Peter's.

She was bred a man, she was almost a son to her great father; and yet, instead of the sonorous epitaph that is inscribed beside her tomb, perhaps a truer one would be the words of the vexed Pope:

“*E donna!*”

KING CHARLES II. AND
NELL GWYN

KING CHARLES II. AND NELL GWYN

ONE might classify the kings of England in many ways. John was undoubtedly the most unpopular. The impetuous yet far-seeing Henry II., with the other two great warriors, Edward I. and Edward III., and William of Orange, did most for the foundation and development of England's constitutional law. Some monarchs, such as Edward II. and the womanish Henry VI., have been contemptible. Hard-working, useful kings have been Henry VII., the Georges, William IV., and especially the last Edward.

If we consider those monarchs who have in some curious way touched the popular fancy without reference to their virtues we must go back to Richard of the Lion Heart, who saw but little of England, yet was the best essentially English king, and to Henry V., gallant soldier and conqueror of France. Even Henry VIII. had a warm place in the affection of his countrymen, few of whom saw him near at hand, but most of whom made him a sort of regal incarnation of John Bull—wrestling and tilting and

122 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

boxing, eating great joints of beef, and staying his thirst with flagons of ale—a big, healthy, masterful animal, in fact, who gratified the national love of splendor and stood up manfully in his struggle with the Pope.

But if you look for something more than ordinary popularity—something that belongs to sentiment and makes men willing to become martyrs for a royal cause—we must find these among the Stuart kings. It is odd, indeed, that even at this day there are Englishmen and Englishwomen who believe their lawful sovereign to be a minor Bavarian princess in whose veins there runs the Stuart blood. Prayers are said for her at English shrines, and toasts are drunk to her in rare old wine.

Of course, to-day this cult of the Stuarts is nothing but a fad. No one ever expects to see a Stuart on the English throne. But it is significant of the deep strain of romance which the six Stuarts who reigned in England have implanted in the English heart. The old Jacobite ballads still have power to thrill. Queen Victoria herself used to have the pipers file out before her at Balmoral to the “skirling” of “Bonnie Dundee,” “Over the Water to Charlie,” and “Wha’ll Be King but Charlie?” It is a senti-

ment that has never died. Her late majesty used to say that when she heard these tunes she became for the moment a Jacobite; just as the Empress Eugénie at the height of her power used pertly to remark that she herself was the only Legitimist left in France.

It may be suggested that the Stuarts are still loved by many Englishmen because they were unfortunate; yet this is hardly true, after all. Many of them were fortunate enough. The first of them, King James, an absurd creature, speaking broad Scotch, timid, foolishly fond of favorites, and having none of the dignity of a monarch, lived out a lengthy reign. The two royal women of the family—Anne and Mary—had no misfortunes of a public nature. Charles II. reigned for more than a quarter of a century, lapped in every kind of luxury, and died a king.

The first Charles was beheaded and afterward styled a “saint”; yet the majority of the English people were against his arrogance, or else he would have won his great struggle against Parliament. The second James was not popular at all. Nevertheless, no sooner had he been expelled, and been succeeded by a Dutchman gnawing asparagus and reeking of cheeses, than there was already a Stuart legend. Even

had there been no pretenders to carry on the cult, the Stuarts would still have passed into history as much loved by the people.

It only shows how very little in former days the people expected of a regnant king. Many monarchs have had just a few popular traits, and these have stood out brilliantly against the darkness of the background.

No one could have cared greatly for the first James, but Charles I. was indeed a kingly personage when viewed afar. He was handsome, as a man, fully equaling the French princess who became his wife. He had no personal vices. He was brave, and good to look upon, and had a kingly mien. Hence, although he sought to make his rule over England a tyranny, there were many fine old cavaliers to ride afield for him when he raised his standard, and who, when he died, mourned for him as a "martyr."

Many hardships they underwent while Cromwell ruled with his iron hand; and when that iron hand was relaxed in death, and poor, feeble Richard Cromwell slunk away to his country-seat, what wonder is it that young Charles came back to England and caracoled through the streets of London with a smile for every one and a happy laugh upon his lips? What wonder is it

that the cannon in the Tower thundered a loud welcome, and that all over England, at one season or another, maypoles rose and Christmas fires blazed? For Englishmen at heart are not only monarchists, but they are lovers of good cheer and merrymaking and all sorts of mirth.

Charles II. might well at first have seemed a worthier and wiser successor to his splendid father. As a child, even, he had shown himself to be no faint-hearted creature. When the great Civil War broke out he had joined his father's army. It met with disaster at Edgehill, and was finally shattered by the crushing defeat of Naseby, which afterward inspired Macaulay's most stirring ballad.

Charles was then only a child of twelve, and so his followers did wisely in hurrying him out of England, through the Scilly isles and Jersey to his mother's place of exile. Of course, a child so very young could be of no value as a leader, though his presence might prove an inspiration.

In 1648, however, when he was eighteen years of age, he gathered a fleet of eighteen ships and cruised along the English coast, taking prizes, which he carried to the Dutch ports. When he was at Holland's capital, during his father's trial, he wrote many messages to the Parlia-

mentarians, and even sent them a blank charter, which they might fill in with any stipulations they desired if only they would save and restore their king.

When the head of Charles rolled from the velvet-covered block his son showed himself to be no loiterer or lover of an easy life. He hastened to Scotland, skilfully escaping an English force, and was proclaimed as king and crowned at Scone, in 1651. With ten thousand men he dashed into England, where he knew there were many who would rally at his call. But it was then that Cromwell put forth his supreme military genius and with his Ironsides crushed the royal troops at Worcester.

Charles knew that for the present all was lost. He showed courage and address in covering the flight of his beaten soldiers; but he soon afterward went to France, remaining there and in the Netherlands for eight years as a pensioner of Louis XIV. He knew that time would fight for him far more surely than infantry and horse. England had not been called "Merry England" for nothing; and Cromwell's tyranny was likely to be far more resented than the heavy hand of one who was born a king. So Charles at Paris and Liège, though he had little

money at the time, managed to maintain a royal court, such as it was.

Here there came out another side of his nature. As a child he had borne hardship and privation and had seen the red blood flow upon the battlefield. Now, as it were, he allowed a certain sensuous, pleasure-loving ease to envelop him. The red blood should become the rich red burgundy; the sound of trumpets and kettledrums should give way to the melody of lutes and viols. He would be a king of pleasure if he were to be king at all. And therefore his court, even in exile, was a court of gallantry and ease. The Pope refused to lend him money, and the King of France would not increase his pension, but there were many who foresaw that Charles would not long remain in exile; and so they gave him what he wanted and waited until he could give them what they would ask for in their turn.

Charles at this time was not handsome, like his father. His complexion was swarthy, his figure by no means imposing, though always graceful. When he chose he could bear himself with all the dignity of a monarch. He had a singularly pleasant manner, and a word from him could win over the harshest opponent.

The old cavaliers who accompanied their master in exile were like Napoleon's veterans in Elba. With their tall, powerful forms they stalked about the courtyards, sniffing their disapproval at these foreign ways and longing grimly for the time when they could once more smell the pungent powder of the battle-field. But, as Charles had hoped, the change was coming. Not merely were his own subjects beginning to long for him and to pray in secret for the king, but continental monarchs who maintained spies in England began to know of this. To them Charles was no longer a penniless exile. He was a king who before long would take possession of his kingdom.

A very wise woman—the Queen Regent of Portugal—was the first to act on this information. Portugal was then very far from being a petty state. It had wealth at home and rich colonies abroad, while its flag was seen on every sea. The queen regent, being at odds with Spain, and wishing to secure an ally against that power, made overtures to Charles, asking him whether a match might not be made between him and the Princess Catharine of Braganza. It was not merely her daughter's hand that she offered, but a splendid dowry.

She would pay Charles a million pounds in gold and cede to England two valuable ports.

The match was not yet made, but by 1659 it had been arranged. The Spaniards were furious, for Charles's cause began to appear successful.

She was a quaint and rather piteous little figure, she who was destined to be the wife of the Merry Monarch. Catharine was dark, petite, and by no means beautiful; yet she had a very sweet expression and a heart of utter innocence. She had been wholly convent-bred. She knew nothing of the world. She was told that in marriage she must obey in all things, and that the chief duty of a wife was to make her husband happy.

Poor child! It was a too gracious preparation for a very graceless husband. Charles, in exile, had already made more than one discreditable connection and he was already the father of more than one growing son.

First of all, he had been smitten by the bold ways of one Lucy Walters. Her impudence amused the exiled monarch. She was not particularly beautiful, and when she spoke as others did she was rather tiresome; but her pertness and the inexperience of the king when he went

130 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

into exile made her seem attractive. She bore him a son, in the person of that brilliant adventurer whom Charles afterward created Duke of Monmouth. Many persons believe that Charles had married Lucy Walters, just as George IV. may have married Mrs. Fitzherbert; yet there is not the slightest proof of it, and it must be classed with popular legends.

There was also one Catherine Peg, or Kep, whose son was afterward made Earl of Plymouth. It must be confessed that in his attachments to English women Charles showed little care for rank or station. Lucy Walters and Catherine Peg were very illiterate creatures.

In a way it was precisely this sort of preference that made Charles so popular among the people. He seemed to make rank of no account, but would chat in the most familiar and friendly way with any one whom he happened to meet. His easy, democratic manner, coupled with the grace and prestige of royalty, made friends for him all over England. The treasury might be nearly bankrupt; the navy might be routed by the Dutch; the king himself might be too much given to dissipation; but his people forgave him all, because everybody knew that Charles

would clap an honest citizen on the back and joke with all who came to see him feed the swans in Regent's Park.

The popular name for him was "Rowley," or "Old Rowley"—a nickname of mysterious origin, though it is said to have been given him from a fancied resemblance to a famous hunter in his stables. Perhaps it is the very final test of popularity that a ruler should have a nickname known to every one.

Cromwell's death roused all England to a frenzy of king-worship. The Roundhead, General Monk, and his soldiers proclaimed Charles King of England and escorted him to London in splendid state. That was a day when national feeling reached a point such as never has been before or since. Oughtred, the famous mathematician, died of joy when the royal emblems were restored. Urquhart, the translator of Rabelais, died, it is said, of laughter at the people's wild delight—a truly Rabelaisian end.

There was the king once more; and England, breaking through its long period of Puritanism, laughed and danced with more vivacity than ever the French had shown. All the pipers and the players and panderers to vice, the mountebanks, the sensual men, and the lawless women

132 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

poured into the presence of the king, who had been too long deprived of the pleasure that his nature craved. Parliament voted seventy thousand pounds for a memorial to Charles's father, but the irresponsible king spent the whole sum on the women who surrounded him. His severest counselor, Lord Clarendon, sent him a remonstrance.

"How can I build such a memorial," asked Charles, "when I don't know where my father's remains are buried?"

He took money from the King of France to make war against the Dutch, who had befriended him. It was the French king, too, who sent him that insidious, subtle daughter of Brittany, Louise de K  roualle—Duchess of Portsmouth—a diplomat in petticoats, who won the king's wayward affections, and spied on what he did and said, and faithfully reported all of it to Paris. She became the mother of the Duke of Lenox, and she was feared and hated by the English more than any other of his mistresses. They called her "Madam Carwell," and they seemed to have an instinct that she was no mere plaything of his idle hours, but was like some strange exotic serpent, whose poison might in the end sting the honor of England.

There is a pitiful little episode in the marriage of Charles with his Portuguese bride, Catharine of Braganza. The royal girl came to him fresh from the cloisters of her convent. There was something about her grace and innocence that touched the dissolute monarch, who was by no means without a heart. For a time he treated her with great respect, and she was happy. At last she began to notice about her strange faces—faces that were evil, wanton, or overbold. The court became more and more a seat of reckless revelry.

Finally Catharine was told that the Duchess of Cleveland—that splendid termagant, Barbara Villiers—had been appointed lady of the bedchamber. She was told at the same time who this vixen was—that she was no fit attendant for a virtuous woman, and that her three sons, the Dukes of Southampton, Grafton, and Northumberland, were also the sons of Charles.

Fluttered and frightened and dismayed, the queen hastened to her husband and begged him not to put this slight upon her. A year or two before, she had never dreamed that life contained such things as these; but now it seemed to contain nothing else. Charles spoke sternly to her until she burst into tears, and then he

134 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

petted her and told her that her duty as a queen compelled her to submit to many things which a lady in private life need not endure.

After a long and poignant struggle with her own emotions the little Portuguese yielded to the wishes of her lord. She never again reproached him. She even spoke with kindness to his favorites and made him feel that she studied his happiness alone. Her gentleness affected him so that he always spoke to her with courtesy and real friendship. When the Protestant mobs sought to drive her out of England he showed his courage and manliness by standing by her and refusing to allow her to be molested.

Indeed, had Charles been always at his best he would have had a very different name in history. He could be in every sense a king. He had a keen knowledge of human nature. Though he governed England very badly, he never governed it so badly as to lose his popularity.

The epigram of Rochester, written at the king's own request, was singularly true of Charles. No man relied upon his word, yet men loved him. He never said anything that was foolish, and he very seldom did anything that

was wise; yet his easy manners and gracious ways endeared him to those who met him.

One can find no better picture of his court than that which Sir Walter Scott has drawn so vividly in *Pevekil of the Peak*; or, if one wishes first-hand evidence, it can be found in the diaries of Evelyn and of Samuel Pepys. In them we find the rakes and dicers, full of strange oaths, deep drunkards, vile women and still viler men, all striving for the royal favor and offering the filthiest lures, amid routs and balls and noisy entertainments, of which it is recorded that more than once some woman gave birth to a child among the crowd of dancers.

No wonder that the little Portuguese queen kept to herself and did not let herself be drawn into this swirling, roaring, roistering saturnalia. She had less influence even than Moll Davis, whom Charles picked out of a coffee-house, and far less than "Madam Carwell," to whom it is reported that a great English nobleman once presented pearls to the value of eight thousand pounds in order to secure her influence in a single stroke of political business.

Of all the women who surrounded Charles there was only one who cared anything for him or for England. The rest were all either selfish

136 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

or treacherous or base. This one exception has been so greatly written of, both in fiction and in history, as to make it seem almost unnecessary to add another word; yet it may well be worth while to separate the fiction from the fact and to see how much of the legend of Eleanor Gwyn is true.

The fanciful story of her birthplace is most surely quite unfounded. She was not the daughter of a Welsh officer, but of two petty hucksters who had their booth in the lowest precincts of London. In those days the Strand was partly open country, and as it neared the city it showed the mansions of the gentry set in their green-walled parks. At one end of the Strand, however, was Drury Lane, then the haunt of criminals and every kind of wretch, while nearer still was the notorious Coal Yard, where no citizen dared go unarmed.

Within this dreadful place children were kidnapped and trained to various forms of vice. It was a school for murderers and robbers and prostitutes; and every night when the torches flared it vomited forth its deadly spawn. Here was the earliest home of Eleanor Gwyn, and out of this den of iniquity she came at night to sell oranges at the entrance to the theaters. She

was stage-struck, and endeavored to get even a minor part in a play; but Betterton, the famous actor, thrust her aside when she ventured to apply to him.

It must be said that in everything that was external, except her beauty, she fell short of a fastidious taste. She was intensely ignorant even for that time. She spoke in a broad Cockney dialect. She had lived the life of the Coal Yard, and, like Zola's Nana, she could never remember the time when she had known the meaning of chastity.

Nell Gwyn was, in fact, a product of the vilest slums of London; and precisely because she was this we must set her down as intrinsically a good woman—one of the truest, frankest, and most right-minded of whom the history of such women has anything to tell. All that external circumstances could do to push her down into the mire was done; yet she was not pushed down, but emerged as one of those rare souls who have in their natures an uncontaminated spring of goodness and honesty. Unlike Barbara Villiers or Lucy Walters or Louise de Kéroualle, she was neither a harpy nor a foe to England.

Charles is said first to have met her when

he, incognito, with another friend, was making the rounds of the theaters at night. The king spied her glowing, nut-brown face in one of the boxes, and, forgetting his incognito, went up and joined her. She was with her protector of the time, Lord Buckhurst, who, of course, recognized his majesty.

Presently the whole party went out to a neighboring coffee-house, where they drank and ate together. When it came time to pay the reckoning the king found that he had no money, nor had his friend. Lord Buckhurst, therefore, paid the bill, while Mistress Nell jeered at the other two, saying that this was the most poverty-stricken party that she had ever met.

Charles did not lose sight of her. Her frankness and honest manner pleased him. There came a time when she was known to be a mistress of the king, and she bore a son, who was ennobled as the Duke of St. Albans, but who did not live to middle age. Nell Gwyn was much with Charles; and after his tempestuous scenes with Barbara Villiers, and the feeling of dishonor which the Duchess of Portsmouth made him experience, the girl's good English bluntness was a pleasure far more rare than sentiment.

Somehow, just as the people had come to mistrust "Madam Carwell," so they came to like Nell Gwyn. She saw enough of Charles, and she liked him well enough, to wish that he might do his duty by his people; and she alone had the boldness to speak out what she thought. One day she found him lolling in an arm-chair and complaining that the people were not satisfied.

"You can very easily satisfy them," said Nell Gwyn. "Dismiss your women and attend to the proper business of a king."

Again, her heart was touched at the misfortunes of the old soldiers who had fought for Charles and for his father during the Civil War, and who were now neglected, while the treasury was emptied for French favorites, and while the policy of England itself was bought and sold in France. Many and many a time, when other women of her kind used their lures to get jewels or titles or estates or actual heaps of money, Nell Gwyn besought the king to aid these needy veterans. Because of her efforts Chelsea Hospital was founded. Such money as she had she shared with the poor and with those who had fought for her royal lover.

As I have said, she is a historical type of the

woman who loses her physical purity, yet who retains a sense of honor and of honesty which nothing can take from her. There are not many such examples, and therefore this one is worth remembering.

Of anecdotes concerning her there are many, but not often has their real import been detected. If she could twine her arms about the monarch's neck and transport him in a delirium of passion, this was only part of what she did. She tried to keep him right and true and worthy of his rank; and after he had ceased to care much for her as a lover he remembered that she had been faithful in many other things.

Then there came the death-bed scene, when Charles, in his inimitable manner, apologized to those about him because he was so long in dying. A far sincerer sentence was that which came from his heart, as he cried out, in the very pangs of death:

“Do not let poor Nelly starve!”

**MAURICE OF SAXONY AND
ADRIENNE LECOUVREUR.**

MAURICE OF SAXONY AND ADRIENNE LECOUVREUR

IT is an old saying that to every womanly woman self-sacrifice is almost a necessity of her nature. To make herself of small account as compared with the one she loves; to give freely of herself, even though she may receive nothing in return; to suffer, and yet to feel an inner poignant joy in all this suffering—here is a most wonderful trait of womanhood. Perhaps it is akin to the maternal instinct; for to the mother, after she has felt the throb of a new life within her, there is no sacrifice so great and no anguish so keen that she will not welcome it as the outward sign and evidence of her il-limitable love.

In most women this spirit of self-sacrifice is checked and kept within ordinary bounds by the circumstances of their lives. In many small things they do yield and they do suffer; yet it is not in yielding and in suffering that they find their deepest joy.

There are some, however, who seem to have

been born with an abnormal capacity for enduring hardship and mental anguish; so that by a sort of contradiction they find their happiness in sorrow. Such women are endowed with a remarkable degree of sensibility. They feel intensely. In moments of grief and disappointment, and even of despair, there steals over them a sort of melancholy pleasure. It is as if they loved dim lights and mournful music and scenes full of sad suggestion.

If everything goes well with them, they are unwilling to believe that such good fortune will last. If anything goes wrong with them, they are sure that this is only the beginning of something even worse. The music of their lives is written in a minor key.

Now, for such women as these, the world at large has very little charity. It speaks slightly of them as "agonizers." It believes that they are "fond of making scenes." It regards as an affectation something that is really instinctive and inevitable. Unless such women are beautiful and young and charming they are treated badly; and this is often true in spite of all their natural attractiveness, for they seem to court ill usage as if they were saying frankly:

"Come, take us! We will give you every-

thing and ask for nothing. We do not expect true and enduring love. Do not be constant or generous or even kind. We know that we shall suffer. But, none the less, in our sorrow there will be sweetness, and even in our abasement we shall feel a sort of triumph."

In history there is one woman who stands out conspicuously as a type of her melancholy sisterhood, one whose life was full of disappointment even when she was most successful, and of indignity even when she was most sought after and admired. This woman was Adrienne Lecouvreur, famous in the annals of the stage, and still more famous in the annals of unrequited—or, at any rate, unhappy—love.

Her story is linked with that of a man no less remarkable than herself, a hero of chivalry, a marvel of courage, of fascination, and of irresponsibility.

Adrienne Lecouvreur—her name was originally Couvreur—was born toward the end of the seventeenth century in the little French village of Daméry, not far from Rheims, where her aunt was a laundress and her father a hatter in a small way. Of her mother, who died in childbirth, we know nothing; but her father was a man of gloomy and ungovernable temper,

breaking out into violent fits of passion, in one of which, long afterward, he died, raving and yelling like a maniac.

Adrienne was brought up at the wash-tub, and became accustomed to a wandering life, in which she went from one town to another. What she had inherited from her mother is, of course, not known; but she had all her father's strangely pessimistic temper, softened only by the fact that she was a girl. From her earliest years she was unhappy; yet her unhappiness was largely of her own choosing. Other girls of her own station met life cheerfully, worked away from dawn till dusk, and then had their moments of amusement, and even jollity, with their companions, after the fashion of all children. But Adrienne Lecouvreur was unhappy because she chose to be. It was not the wash-tub that made her so, for she had been born to it; nor was it the half-mad outbreaks of her father, because to her, at least, he was not unkind. Her discontent sprang from her excessive sensibility.

Indeed, for a peasant child she had reason to think herself far more fortunate than her associates. Her intelligence was great. Ambition was awakened in her before she was ten years of age, when she began to learn and to recite

poems—learning them, as has been said, “between the wash-tub and the ironing-board,” and reciting them to the admiration of older and wiser people than she. Even at ten she was a very beautiful child, with great lambent eyes, an exquisite complexion, and a lovely form, while she had the further gift of a voice that thrilled the listener and, when she chose, brought tears to every eye. She was, indeed, a natural elocutionist, knowing by instinct all those modulations of tone and varied cadences which go to the hearer’s heart.

It was very like Adrienne Lecouvreur to memorize only such poems as were mournful, just as in after life she could win success upon the stage only in tragic parts. She would repeat with a sort of ecstasy the pathetic poems that were then admired; and she was soon able to give up her menial work, because many people asked her to their houses so that they could listen to the divinely beautiful voice charged with the emotion which was always at her command.

When she was thirteen her father moved to Paris, where she was placed at school—a very humble school in a very humble quarter of the city. Yet even there her genius showed itself at

that early age. A number of children and young people, probably influenced by Adrienne, formed themselves into a theatrical company from the pure love of acting. A friendly grocer let them have an empty store-room for their performances, and in this store-room Adrienne Lecouvreur first acted in a tragedy by Corneille, assuming the part of leading woman.

Her genius for the stage was like the genius of Napoleon for war. She had had no teaching. She had never been inside of any theater; and yet she delivered the magnificent lines with all the power and fire and effectiveness of a most accomplished actress. People thronged to see her and to feel the tempest of emotion which shook her as she sustained her part, which for the moment was as real to her as life itself.

At first only the people of the neighborhood knew anything about these amateur performances; but presently a lady of rank, one Mme. du Gué, came out of curiosity and was fascinated by the little actress. Mme. du Gué offered the spacious courtyard of her own house, and fitted it with some of the appurtenances of a theater. From that moment the fame of Adrienne spread throughout all Paris. The courtyard was crowded by gentlemen and ladies, by

people of distinction from the court, and at last even by actors and actresses from the Comédie Française.

It is, in fact, a remarkable tribute to Adrienne that in her thirteenth year she excited so much jealousy among the actors of the Comédie that they evoked the law against her. Theaters required a royal license, and of course poor little Adrienne's company had none. Hence legal proceedings were begun, and the most famous actresses in Paris talked of having these clever children imprisoned! Upon this the company sought the precincts of the Temple, where no legal warrant could be served without the express order of the king himself.

There for a time the performances still went on. Finally, as the other children were not geniuses, but merely boys and girls in search of fun, the little company broke up. Its success, however, had determined for ever the career of Adrienne. With her beautiful face, her lithe and exquisite figure, her golden voice, and her instinctive art, it was plain enough that her future lay upon the stage; and so at fourteen or fifteen she began where most actresses leave off—accomplished and attractive, and having had a practical training in her profession.

Diderot, in that same century, observed that the truest actor is one who does not feel his part at all, but produces his effects by intellectual effort and intelligent observation. Behind the figure on the stage, torn with passion or rollicking with mirth, there must always be the cool and unemotional mind which directs and governs and controls. This same theory was both held and practised by the late Benoît Constant Coquelin. To some extent it was the theory of Garrick and Fechter and Edwin Booth; though it was rejected by the two Keans, and by Edwin Forrest, who entered so thoroughly into the character which he assumed, and who let loose such tremendous bursts of passion that other actors dreaded to support him on the stage in such parts as *Spartacus* and *Metamora*.

It is needless to say that a girl like Adrienne Lecouvreur flung herself with all the intensity of her nature into every rôle she played. This was the greatest secret of her success; for, with her, nature rose superior to art. On the other hand, it fixed her dramatic limitations, for it barred her out of comedy. Her melancholy, morbid disposition was in the fullest sympathy with tragic heroines; but she failed when she tried to represent the lighter moods and the

merry moments of those who welcome mirth. She could counterfeit despair, and unforced tears would fill her eyes; but she could not laugh and romp and simulate a gaiety that was never hers.

Adrienne would have been delighted to act at one of the theaters in Paris; but they were closed to her through jealousy. She went into the provinces, in the eastern part of France, and for ten years she was a leading lady there in many companies and in many towns. As she blossomed into womanhood there came into her life the love which was to be at once a source of the most profound interest and of the most intense agony.

It is odd that all her professional success never gave her any happiness. The life of the actress who traveled from town to town, the crude and coarse experiences which she had to undergo, the disorder and the unsettled mode of living, all produced in her a profound disgust. She was of too exquisite a fiber to live in such a way, especially in a century when the refinements of existence were for the very few.

She speaks herself of "obligatory amusements, the insistence of men, and of love affairs." Yet how could such a woman as Adri-

enne Lecouvreur keep herself from love affairs? The motion of the stage and its mimic griefs satisfied her only while she was actually upon the boards. Love offered her an emotional excitement that endured and that was always changing. It was "the profoundest instinct of her being"; and she once wrote: "What could one do in the world without loving?"

Still, through these ten years she seems to have loved only that she might be unhappy. There was a strange twist in her mind. Men who were honorable and who loved her with sincerity she treated very badly. Men who were indifferent or ungrateful or actually base she seemed to choose by a sort of perverse instinct. Perhaps the explanation of it is that during those ten years, though she had many lovers, she never really loved. She sought excitement, passion, and after that the mournfulness which comes when passion dies. Thus, one man after another came into her life—some of them promising marriage—and she bore two children, whose fathers were unknown, or at least uncertain. But, after all, one can scarcely pity her, since she had not yet in reality known that great passion which comes but once in life. So far she had learned only a sort of feeble

cynicism, which she expressed in letters and in such sayings as these:

“There are sweet errors which I would not venture to commit again. My experiences, all too sad, have served to illumine my reason.”

“I am utterly weary of love and prodigiously tempted to have no more of it for the rest of my life; because, after all, I don’t wish either to die or to go mad.”

Yet she also said: “I know too well that no one dies of grief.”

She had had, indeed, some very unfortunate experiences. Men of rank had loved her and had then cast her off. An actor, one Clavel, would have married her, but she would not accept his offer. A magistrate in Strasburg promised marriage; and then, when she was about to accept him, he wrote to her that he was going to yield to the wishes of his family and make a more advantageous alliance. And so she was alternately caressed and repulsed—a mere plaything; and yet this was probably all that she really needed at the time—something to stir her, something to make her mournful or indignant or ashamed.

It was inevitable that at last Adrienne Lecouvreur should appear in Paris. She had won

such renown throughout the provinces that even those who were intensely jealous of her were obliged to give her due consideration. In 1717, when she was in her twenty-fifth year, she became a member of the Comédie Française. There she made an immediate and most brilliant impression. She easily took the leading place. She was one of the glories of Paris, for she became the fashion outside the theater. For the first time the great classic plays were given, not in the monotonous singsong which had become a sort of theatrical convention, but with all the fire and naturalness of life.

Being the fashion, Mlle. Lecouvreur elevated the social rank of actors and of actresses. Her *salon* was thronged by men and women of rank. Voltaire wrote poems in her honor. To be invited to her dinners was almost like receiving a decoration from the king. She ought to have been happy, for she had reached the summit of her profession and something more.

Yet still she was unhappy. In all her letters one finds a plaintive tone, a little moaning sound that shows how slightly her nature had been changed. No longer, however, did she throw herself away upon dullards or brutes. An English peer—Lord Peterborough—not

realizing that she was different from other actresses of that loose-lived age, said to her coarsely at his first introduction:

“Come now! Show me lots of wit and lots of love.”

The remark was characteristic of the time. Yet Adrienne had learned at least one thing, and that was the discontent which came from light affairs. She had thrown herself away too often. If she could not love with her entire being, if she could not give all that was in her to be given, whether of her heart or mind or soul, then she would love no more at all.

At this time there came to Paris a man remarkable in his own century, and one who afterward became almost a hero of romance. This was Maurice, Comte de Saxe, as the French called him, his German name and title being Moritz, Graf von Sachsen, while we usually term him, in English, Marshal Saxe. Maurice de Saxe was now, in 1721, entering his twenty-fifth year. Already, though so young, his career had been a strange one; and it was destined to be still more remarkable. He was the natural son of Duke Augustus II. of Saxony, who later became King of Poland, and who is known in history as Augustus the Strong.

Augustus was a giant in stature and in strength, handsome, daring, unscrupulous, and yet extremely fascinating. His life was one of revelry and fighting and display. When in his cups he would often call for a horseshoe and twist it into a knot with his powerful fingers. Many were his mistresses; but the one for whom he cared the most was a beautiful and high-spirited Swedish girl of rank, Aurora von Königsmarck. She was descended from a rough old field-marshal who in the Thirty Years' War had slashed and sacked and pillaged and plundered to his heart's content. From him Aurora von Königsmarck seemed to have inherited a high spirit and a sort of lawlessness which charmed the stalwart Augustus of Poland.

Their son, Maurice de Saxe, inherited everything that was good in his parents, and a great deal that was less commendable. As a mere child of twelve he had insisted on joining the army of Prince Eugène, and had seen rough service in a very strenuous campaign. Two years later he showed such daring on the battle-field that Prince Eugène summoned him and paid him a compliment under the form of a rebuke.

"Young man," he said, "you must not mistake mere recklessness for valor."

Before he was twenty he had attained the stature and strength of his royal father; and, to prove it, he in his turn called for a horseshoe, which he twisted and broke in his fingers. He fought on the side of the Russians and Poles, and again against the Turks, everywhere displaying high courage and also genius as a commander; for he never lost his self-possession amid the very blackest danger, but possessed, as Carlyle says, "vigilance, foresight, and sagacious precaution."

Exceedingly handsome, Maurice was a master of all the arts that pleased, with just a touch of roughness, which seemed not unfitting in so gallant a soldier. His troops adored him and would follow wherever he might choose to lead them; for he exercised over these rude men a magnetic power resembling that of Napoleon in after years. In private life he was a hard drinker and fond of every form of pleasure. Having no fortune of his own, a marriage was arranged for him with the Countess von Löben, who was immensely wealthy; but in three years he had squandered all her money upon his pleasures, and had, moreover, got himself heavily in debt.

It was at this time that he first came to Paris

to study military tactics. He had fought hard against the French in the wars that were now ended; but his chivalrous bearing, his handsome person, and his reckless joviality made him at once a universal favorite in Paris. To the perfumed courtiers, with their laces and lovelocks and mincing ways, Maurice de Saxe came as a sort of knight of old—jovial, daring, pleasure-loving. Even his broken French was held to be quite charming; and to see him break a horse-shoe with his fingers threw every one into raptures.

No wonder, then, that he was welcomed in the very highest circles. Almost at once he attracted the notice of the Princesse de Conti, a beautiful woman of the blood royal. Of her it has been said that she was “the personification of a kiss, the incarnation of an embrace, the ideal of a dream of love.” Her chestnut hair was tinted with little gleams of gold. Her eyes were violet black. Her complexion was dazzling. But by the king’s orders she had been forced to marry a hunchback—a man whose very limbs were so weakened by disease and evil living that they would often fail to support him, and he would fall to the ground, a writhing, screaming mass of ill-looking flesh.

It is not surprising that his lovely wife should have shuddered much at his abuse of her and still more at his grotesque endearments. When her eyes fell on Maurice de Saxe she saw in him one who could free her from her bondage. By a skilful trick he led the Prince de Conti to invade the sleeping-room of the princess, with servants, declaring that she was not alone. The charge proved quite untrue, and so she left her husband, having won the sympathy of her own world, which held that she had been insulted. But it was not she who was destined to win and hold the love of Maurice de Saxe.

Not long after his appearance in the French capital he was invited to dine with the "Queen of Paris," Adrienne Lecouvreur. Saxe had seen her on the stage. He knew her previous history. He knew that she was very much of a soiled dove; but when he met her these two natures, so utterly dissimilar, leaped together, as it were, through the indescribable attraction of opposites. He was big and powerful; she was small and fragile. He was merry, and full of quips and jests; she was reserved and melancholy. Each felt in the other a need supplied.

At one of their earliest meetings the climax came. Saxe was not the man to hesitate; while

she already, in her thoughts, had made a full surrender. In one great sweep he gathered her into his arms. It appeared to her as if no man had ever laid his hand upon her until that moment. She cried out:

“Now, for the first time in my life, I seem to live!”

It was, indeed, the very first love which in her checkered career was really worthy of the name. She had supposed that all such things were passed and gone, that her heart was closed for ever, that she was invulnerable; and yet here she found herself clinging about the neck of this impetuous soldier and showing him all the shy fondness and the unselfish devotion of a young girl. From this instant Adrienne Lecouvreur never loved another man and never even looked at any other man with the slightest interest. For nine long years the two were bound together, though there were strange events to ruffle the surface of their love.

Maurice de Saxe had been sired by a king. He had the lofty ambition to be a king himself, and he felt the stirrings of that genius which in after years was to make him a great soldier, and to win the brilliant victory of Fontenoy, which to this very day the French are never tired of re-

calling. Already Louis XV. had made him a marshal of France; and a certain restlessness came over him. He loved Adrienne; yet he felt that to remain in the enjoyment of her witcheries ought not to be the whole of a man's career.

Then the Grand Duchy of Courland—at that time a vassal state of Poland, now part of Russia—sought a ruler. Maurice de Saxe was eager to secure its throne, which would make him at least semi-royal and the chief of a principality. He hastened thither and found that money was needed to carry out his plans. The widow of the late duke—the Grand Duchess Anna, niece of Peter the Great, and later Empress of Russia—as soon as she had met this dazzling genius, offered to help him to acquire the duchy if he would only marry her. He did not utterly refuse. Still another woman of high rank, the Grand Duchess Elizabeth of Russia, Peter the Great's daughter, made him very much the same proposal.

Both of these imperial women might well have attracted a man like Maurice de Saxe, had he been wholly fancy-free, for the second of them inherited the high spirit and the genius of the great Peter, while the first was a pleasure-seeking princess, resembling some of those Roman

empresses who loved to stoop that they might conquer. She is described as indolent and sensual, and she once declared that the chief good in the world was love. Yet, though she neglected affairs of state and gave them over to favorites, she won and kept the affections of her people. She was unquestionably endowed with the magnetic gift of winning hearts.

Adrienne, who was left behind in Paris, knew very little of what was going on. Only two things were absolutely clear to her. One was that if her lover secured the duchy he must be parted from her. The other was that without money his ambition must be thwarted, and that he would then return to her. Here was a test to try the soul of any woman. It proved the height and the depth of her devotion. Come what might, Maurice should be Duke of Courland, even though she lost him. She gathered together her whole fortune, sold every jewel that she possessed, and sent her lover the sum of nearly a million francs.

This incident shows how absolutely she was his. But in fact, because of various intrigues, he failed of election to the ducal throne of Courland, and he returned to Adrienne with all her money spent, and without even the grace, at

first, to show his gratitude. He stormed and raged over his ill luck. She merely soothed and petted him, though she had heard that he had thought of marrying another woman to secure the dukedom. In one of her letters she bursts out with the pitiful exclamation :

I am distracted with rage and anguish. Is it not natural to cry out against such treachery? This man surely ought to know me—he ought to love me. Oh, my God! What are we—what *are* we?

But still she could not give him up, nor could he give her up, though there were frightful scenes between them—times when he cruelly reproached her and when her native melancholy deepened into outbursts of despair. Finally there occurred an incident which is more or less obscure in parts. The Duchesse de Bouillon, a great lady of the court—facile, feline, licentious, and eager for delights—resolved that she would win the love of Maurice de Saxe. She set herself to win it openly and without any sense of shame. Maurice himself at times, when the tears of Adrienne proved wearisome, flirted with the duchess.

Yet, even so, Adrienne held the first place in

his heart, and her rival knew it. Therefore she resolved to humiliate Adrienne, and to do so in the place where the actress had always reigned supreme. There was to be a gala performance of Racine's great tragedy, "Phedre," with Adrienne, of course, in the title-rôle. The Duchesse de Bouillon sent a large number of her lackeys with orders to hiss and jeer, and, if possible, to break off the play. Malignantly delighted with her plan, the duchess arrayed herself in jewels and took her seat in a conspicuous stage-box, where she could watch the coming storm and gloat over the discomfiture of her rival.

When the curtain rose, and when Adrienne appeared as Phedre, an uproar began. It was clear to the great actress that a plot had been devised against her. In an instant her whole soul was afire. The queen-like majesty of her bearing compelled silence throughout the house. Even the hired lackeys were overawed by it. Then Adrienne moved swiftly across the stage and fronted her enemy, speaking into her very face the three insulting lines which came to her at that moment of the play:

I am not of those women void of shame,
Who, savoring in crime the joys of peace,
Harden their faces till they cannot blush!

The whole house rose and burst forth into tremendous applause. Adrienne had won, for the woman who had tried to shame her rose in trepidation and hurried from the theater.

But the end was not yet. Those were evil times, when dark deeds were committed by the great almost with impunity. Secret poisoning was a common trade. To remove a rival was as usual a thing in the eighteenth century as to snub a rival is usual in the twentieth.

Not long afterward, on the night of March 15, 1730, Adrienne Lecouvreur was acting in one of Voltaire's plays with all her power and instinctive art when suddenly she was seized with the most frightful pains. Her anguish was obvious to every one who saw her, and yet she had the courage to go through her part. Then she fainted and was carried home.

Four days later she died, and her death was no less dramatic than her life had been. Her lover and two friends of his were with her, and also a Jesuit priest. He declined to administer extreme unction unless she would declare that she repented of her theatrical career. She stubbornly refused, since she believed that to be the greatest actress of her time was not a sin. Yet still the priest insisted.

Then came the final moment.

“Weary and revolting against this death, this destiny, she stretched her arms with one of the old lovely gestures toward a bust which stood near by and cried—her last cry of passion:

“ ‘There is my world, my hope—yes, and my God!’ ”

The bust was one of Maurice de Saxe.

THE STORY OF PRINCE
CHARLES EDWARD STUART

THE STORY OF PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD STUART

THE royal families of Europe are widely known, yet not all of them are equally renowned. Thus, the house of Romanoff, although comparatively young, stands out to the mind with a sort of barbaric power, more vividly than the Austrian house of Hapsburg, which is the oldest reigning family in Europe, tracing its beginnings backward until they are lost in the Dark Ages. The Hohenzollerns of Prussia are comparatively modern, so far as concerns their royalty. The offshoots of the Bourbons carry on a very proud tradition in the person of the King of Spain, although France, which has been ruled by so many members of the family, will probably never again behold a Bourbon king. The deposed Braganzas bear a name which is ancient, but which has a somewhat tinsel sound.

The Bonapartes, of course, are merely parvenus, and they have had the good taste to pretend to no antiquity of birth. The first Napoleon, dining at a table full of monarchs, when

170 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

he heard one of them deferentially alluding to the Bonaparte family as being very old and noble, exclaimed:

“Pish! My nobility dates from the day of Marengo!”

And the third Napoleon, in announcing his coming marriage with Mlle. de Montijo, used the very word “parvenu” in speaking of himself and of his family. His frankness won the hearts of the French people and helped to reconcile them to a marriage in which the bride was barely noble.

In English history there are two great names to conjure by, at least to the imaginative. One is Plantagenet, which seems to contain within itself the very essence of all that is patrician, magnificent, and royal. It calls to memory at once the lion-hearted Richard, whose short reign was replete with romance in England and France and Austria and the Holy Land.

But perhaps a name of greater influence is that which links the royal family of Britain to-day with the traditions of the past, and which summons up legend and story and great deeds of history. This is the name of Stuart, about which a whole volume might be written to recall its suggestions and its reminiscences.

The first Stuart (then Stewart) of whom anything is known got his name from the title of "Steward of Scotland," which remained in the family for generations, until the sixth of the line, by marriage with Princess Marjory Bruce, acquired the Scottish crown. That was in the early years of the fourteenth century; and finally, after the death of Elizabeth of England, her rival's son, James VI. of Scotland and I. of England, united under one crown two kingdoms that had so long been at almost constant war.

It is almost characteristic of the Scot that, having small territory, little wealth, and a seat among his peers that is almost ostentatiously humble, he should bit by bit absorb the possessions of all the rest and become their master. Surely, the proud Tudors, whose line ended with Elizabeth, must have despised the "Stewards," whose kingdom was small and bleak and cold, and who could not control their own vassals.

One can imagine also, with Sir Walter Scott, the haughty nobles of the English court sneering covertly at the awkward, shambling James, pedant and bookworm. Nevertheless, his diplomacy was almost as good as that of Elizabeth

172 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

herself; and, though he did some foolish things, he was very far from being a fool.

In his appearance James was not unlike Abraham Lincoln—an unkingly figure; and yet, like Lincoln, when occasion required it he could rise to the dignity which makes one feel the presence of a king. He was the only Stuart who lacked anything in form or feature or external grace. His son, Charles I., was perhaps one of the worst rulers that England has ever had; yet his uprightness of life, his melancholy yet handsome face, his graceful bearing, and the strong religious element in his character, together with the fact that he was put to death after being treacherously surrendered to his enemies—all these have combined to make almost a saint of him. There are Englishmen to-day who speak of him as “the martyr king,” and who, on certain days of the year, say prayers that beg the Lord’s forgiveness because of Charles’s execution.

The members of the so-called League of the White Rose, founded to perpetuate English allegiance to the direct line of Stuarts, do many things that are quite absurd. They refuse to pray for the present King of England and profess to think that the Princess Mary of Bavaria

is the true ruler of Great Britain. All this represents that trace of sentiment which lingers among the English to-day. They feel that the Stuarts were the last kings of England to rule by the grace of God rather than by the grace of Parliament. As a matter of fact, the present reigning family in England is glad to derive its ancient strain of royal blood through a Stuart—descended on the distaff side from James I., and winding its way through Hanover.

This sentiment for the Stuarts is a thing entirely apart from reason and belongs to the realm of poetry and romance; yet so strong is it that it has shown itself in the most inconsistent fashion. For instance, Sir Walter Scott was a devoted adherent of the house of Hanover. When George IV. visited Edinburgh, Scott was completely carried away by his loyal enthusiasm. He could not see that the man before him was a drunkard and braggart. He viewed him as an incarnation of all the noble traits that ought to hedge about a king. He snatched up a wine-glass from which George had just been drinking and carried it away to be an object of reverence for ever after. Nevertheless, in his heart, and often in his speech, Scott seemed to be a high Tory, and even a Jacobite.

174 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

There are precedents for this. The Empress Eugénie used often to say with a laugh that she was the only true royalist at the imperial court of France. That was well enough for her in her days of flightiness and frivolity. No one, however, accused Queen Victoria of being frivolous, and she was not supposed to have a strong sense of humor. None the less, after listening to the skirling of the bagpipes and to the romantic ballads which were sung in Scotland she is said to have remarked with a sort of sigh:

“Whenever I hear those ballads I feel that England belongs really to the Stuarts!”

Before Queen Victoria was born, when all the sons of George III. were childless, the Duke of Kent was urged to marry, so that he might have a family to continue the succession. In resenting the suggestion he said many things, and among them this was the most striking:

“Why don’t you call the Stuarts back to England? They couldn’t possibly make a worse mess of it than our fellows have!”

But he yielded to persuasion and married. From this marriage came Victoria, who had the sacred drop of Stuart blood which gave England to the Hanoverians; and she was to redeem the blunders and tyrannies of both houses.

The fascination of the Stuarts, which has been carried overseas to America and the British dominions, probably began with the striking history of Mary Queen of Scots. Her brilliancy and boldness and beauty, and especially the pathos of her end, have made us see only her intense womanliness, which in her own day was the first thing that any one observed in her. So, too, with Charles I., romantic figure and knightly gentleman. One regrets his death upon the scaffold, even though his execution was necessary to the growth of freedom.

Many people are no less fascinated by Charles II., that very different type, with his gaiety, his good-fellowship, and his easy-going ways. It is not surprising that his people, most of whom never saw him, were very fond of him, and did not know that he was selfish, a loose liver, and almost a vassal of the king of France.

So it is not strange that the Stuarts, with all their arts and graces, were very hard to displace. James II., with the aid of the French, fought hard before the British troops in Ireland broke the backs of both his armies and sent him into exile. Again in 1715—an episode perpetuated in Thackeray's dramatic story of *Henry Esmond*—came the son of James to take advan-

176 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

tage of the vacancy caused by the death of Queen Anne. But it is perhaps to this claimant's son, the last of the militant Stuarts, that more chivalrous feeling has been given than to any other.

To his followers he was the Young Chevalier, the true Prince of Wales; to his enemies, the Whigs and the Hanoverians, he was "the Pretender." One of the most romantic chapters of history is the one which tells of that last brilliant dash which he made upon the coast of Scotland, landing with but a few attendants and rejecting the support of a French army.

"It is not with foreigners," he said, "but with my own loyal subjects, that I wish to regain the kingdom for my father."

It was a daring deed, and the spectacular side of it has been often commemorated, especially in Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley*. There we see the gallant prince moving through a sort of military panorama. Most of the British troops were absent in Flanders, and the few regiments that could be mustered to meet him were appalled by the ferocity and reckless courage of the Highlanders, who leaped down like wildcats from their hills and flung themselves with dirk and sword upon the British cannon.

We see Sir John Cope retiring at Falkirk, and the astonishing victory of Prestonpans, where disciplined British troops fled in dismay through the morning mist, leaving artillery and supplies behind them. It is Scott again who shows us the prince, master of Edinburgh for a time, while the white rose of Stuart royalty held once more the ancient keep above the Scottish capital. Then we see the Chevalier pressing southward into England, where he hoped to raise an English army to support his own. But his Highlanders cared nothing for England, and the English—even the Catholic gentry—would not rise to support his cause.

Personally, he had every gift that could win allegiance. Handsome, high-tempered, and brave, he could also control his fiery spirit and listen to advice, however unpalatable it might be.

The time was favorable. The British troops had been defeated on the Continent by Marshal Saxe, of whom I have already written, and by Marshal d'Estrées. George II. was a king whom few respected. He could scarcely speak anything but German. He grossly ill-treated his wife. It is said that on one occasion, in a fit of temper, he actually kicked the prime minis-

178 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

ter. Not many felt any personal loyalty to him, and he spent most of his time away from England in his other domain of Hanover.

But precisely here was a reason why Englishmen were willing to put up with him. As between him and the brilliant Stuart there would have been no hesitation had the choice been merely one of men; but it was believed that the return of the Stuarts meant the return of something like absolute government, of taxation without sanction of law, and of religious persecution. Under the Hanoverian George the English people had begun to exercise a considerable measure of self-government. Sharp opposition in Parliament compelled him time and again to yield; and when he was in Hanover the English were left to work out the problem of free government.

Hence, although Prince Charles Edward fascinated all who met him, and although a small army was raised for his support, still the unromantic, common-sense Englishmen felt that things were better than in the days gone by, and most of them refused to take up arms for the cause which sentimentally they favored. Therefore, although the Chevalier stirred all England and sent a thrill through the officers of state in

London, his soldiers gradually deserted, and the Scots insisted on returning to their own country. Although the Stuart troops reached a point as far south as Derby, they were soon pushed backward into Scotland, pursued by an army of about nine thousand men under the Duke of Cumberland, son of George II.

Cumberland was no soldier; he had been soundly beaten by the French on the famous field of Fontenoy. Yet he had firmness and a sort of overmastering brutality, which, with disciplined troops and abundant artillery, were sufficient to win a victory over the untrained Highlanders.

When the battle came five thousand of these mountaineers went roaring along the English lines, with the Chevalier himself at their head. For a moment there was surprise. The Duke of Cumberland had been drinking so heavily that he could give no verbal orders. One of his officers, however, is said to have come to him in his tent, where he was trying to play cards.

“What disposition shall we make of the prisoners?” asked the officer.

The duke tried to reply, but his utterance was very thick.

“No quarter!” he was believed to say.

180 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

The officer objected and begged that such an order as that should be given in writing. The duke rolled over and seized a sheaf of playing-cards. Pulling one out, he scrawled the necessary order, and that was taken to the commanders in the field.

The Highlanders could not stand the cannon fire, and the English won. Then the fury of the common soldiery broke loose upon the country.

There was a reign of fantastic and fiendish brutality. One provost of the town was violently kicked for a mild remonstrance about the destruction of the Episcopalian meeting-house; another was condemned to clean out dirty stables. Men and women were whipped and tortured on slight suspicion or to extract information. Cumberland frankly professed his contempt and hatred of the people among whom he found himself, but he savagely punished robberies committed by private soldiers for their own profit.

"Mild measures will not do," he wrote to Newcastle.

When leaving the North in July, he said:

"All the good we have done is but a little blood-letting, which has only weakened the madness, but not at all cured it; and I tremble to fear that this vile spot may still be the ruin of this island and of our family."

Such was the famous battle of Culloden, fought in 1746, and putting a final end to the hopes of all the Stuarts. As to Cumberland's

order for "No quarter," if any apology can be made for such brutality, it must be found in the fact that the Highland chiefs had on their side agreed to spare no captured enemy.

The battle has also left a name commonly given to the nine of diamonds, which is called "the curse of Scotland," because it is said that on that card Cumberland wrote his bloodthirsty order.

Such, in brief, was the story of Prince Charlie's gallant attempt to restore the kingdom of his ancestors. Even when defeated, he would not at once leave Scotland. A French squadron appeared off the coast near Edinburgh. It had been sent to bring him troops and a large supply of money, but he turned his back upon it and made his way into the Highlands on foot, closely pursued by English soldiers and Lowland spies.

This part of his career is in reality the most romantic of all. He was hunted closely, almost as by hounds. For weeks he had only such sleep as he could snatch during short periods of safety, and there were times when his pursuers came within an inch of capturing him. But never in his life were his spirits so high.

It was a sort of life that he had never seen

before, climbing the mighty rocks, and listening to the thunder of the cataracts, among which he often slept, with only one faithful follower to guard him. The story of his escape is almost incredible, but he laughed and drank and rolled upon the grass when he was free from care. He hobnobbed with the most suspicious-looking caterans, with whom he drank the smoky brew of the North, and lived as he might on fish and onions and bacon and wild fowl, with an appetite such as he had never known at the luxurious court of Versailles or St.-Germain.

After the battle of Culloden the prince would have been captured had not a Scottish girl named Flora Macdonald met him, caused him to be dressed in the clothes of her waiting-maid, and thus got him off to the Isle of Skye.

There for a time it was impossible to follow him; and there the two lived almost alone together. Such a proximity could not fail to stir the romantic feeling of one who was both a youth and a prince. On the other hand, no thought of love-making seems to have entered Flora's mind. If, however, we read Campbell's narrative very closely we can see that Prince Charles made every advance consistent with a delicate remembrance of her sex and services.

It seems to have been his thought that if she cared for him, then the two might well love; and he gave her every chance to show him favor. The youth of twenty-five and the girl of twenty-four roamed together in the long, tufted grass or lay in the sunshine and looked out over the sea. The prince would rest his head in her lap, and she would tumble his golden hair with her slender fingers and sometimes clip off tresses which she preserved to give to friends of hers as love-locks. But to the last he was either too high or too low for her, according to her own modest thought. He was a royal prince, the heir to a throne, or else he was a boy with whom she might play quite fancy-free. A lover he could not be—so pure and beautiful was her thought of him.

These were perhaps the most delightful days of all his life, as they were a beautiful memory in hers. In time he returned to France and resumed his place amid the intrigues that surrounded that other Stuart prince who styled himself James III., and still kept up the appearance of a king in exile. As he watched the artifice and the plotting of these make-believe courtiers he may well have thought of his innocent companion of the Highland wilds.

184 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

As for Flora, she was arrested and imprisoned for five months on English vessels of war. After her release she was married, in 1750; and she and her husband sailed for the American colonies just before the Revolution. In that war Macdonald became a British officer and served against his adopted countrymen. Perhaps because of this reason Flora returned alone to Scotland, where she died at the age of sixty-eight.

The royal prince who would have given her his easy love lived a life of far less dignity in the years that followed his return to France. There was no more hope of recovering the English throne. For him there were left only the idle and licentious diversions of such a court as that in which his father lived.

At the death of James III., even this court was disintegrated, and Prince Charles led a roving life under the title of Earl of Albany. In his wanderings he met Louise Marie, the daughter of a German prince, Gustavus Adolphus of Stolberg. She was only nineteen years of age when she first felt the fascination that he still possessed; but it was an unhappy marriage for the girl when she discovered that her husband was a confirmed drunkard.

Not long after, in fact, she found her life with him so utterly intolerable that she persuaded the Pope to allow her a formal separation. The pontiff intrusted her to her husband's brother, Cardinal York, who placed her in a convent and presently removed her to his own residence in Rome.

Here begins another romance. She was often visited by Vittorio Alfieri, the great Italian poet and dramatist. Alfieri was a man of wealth. In early years he divided his time into alternate periods during which he either studied hard in civil and canonical law, or was a constant attendant upon the race-course, or rushed aimlessly all over Europe without any object except to wear out the post-horses which he used in relays over hundreds of miles of road. His life, indeed, was eccentric almost to insanity; but when he had met the beautiful and lonely Countess of Albany there came over him a striking change. She influenced him for all that was good, and he used to say that he owed her all that was best in his dramatic works.

Sixteen years after her marriage her royal husband died, a worn-out, bloated wreck of one who had been as a youth a model of knightliness and manhood. During his final years he

had fallen to utter destitution, and there was either a touch of half contempt or a feeling of remote kinship in the act of George III., who bestowed upon the prince an annual pension of four thousand pounds. It showed most plainly that England was now consolidated under Hanoverian rule.

When Cardinal York died, in 1807, there was no Stuart left in the male line; and the countess was the last to bear the royal Scottish name of Albany.

After the prince's death his widow is said to have been married to Alfieri, and for the rest of her life she lived in Florence, though Alfieri died nearly twenty-one years before her.

Here we have seen a part of the romance which attaches itself to the name of Stuart—in the chivalrous young prince, leading his Highlanders against the bayonets of the British, lolling idly among the Hebrides, or fallen, at the last, to be a drunkard and the husband of an unwilling consort, who in her turn loved a famous poet. But it is this Stuart, after all, of whom we think when we hear the bagpipes skirling “Over the Water to Charlie” or “Wha’ll be King but Charlie?”

DEAN SWIFT AND THE TWO
ESTHERS

FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

DEAN SWIFT AND THE TWO ESTHERS

THE story of Jonathan Swift and of the two women who gave their lives for love of him is familiar to every student of English literature. Swift himself, both in letters and in politics, stands out a conspicuous figure in the reigns of King William III and Queen Anne. By writing *Gulliver's Travels* he made himself immortal. The external facts of his singular relations with two charming women are sufficiently well known; but a definite explanation of these facts has never yet been given. Swift held his tongue with a repellent taciturnity. No one ever dared to question him. Whether the true solution belongs to the sphere of psychology or of physiology is a question that remains unanswered.

But, as the case is one of the most puzzling

190 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

in the annals of love, it may be well to set forth the circumstances very briefly, to weigh the theories that have already been advanced, and to suggest another.

Jonathan Swift was of Yorkshire stock, though he happened to be born in Dublin, and thus is often spoken of as "the great Irish satirist," or "the Irish dean." It was, in truth, his fate to spend much of his life in Ireland, and to die there, near the cathedral where his remains now rest; but in truth he hated Ireland and everything connected with it, just as he hated Scotland and everything that was Scottish. He was an Englishman to the core.

High-stomached, proud, obstinate, and overmastering, independence was the dream of his life. He would accept no favors, lest he should put himself under obligation; and although he could give generously, and even lavishly, he lived for the most part a miser's life, hoarding every penny and halfpenny that he could. Whatever one may think of him, there is no doubt that he was a very manly man. Too many of his portraits give the impression of a sour, supercilious pedant; but the finest of them all—that by Jervas—shows him as he must have been at his very prime, with a face

that was almost handsome, and a look of attractive humor which strengthens rather than lessens the power of his brows and of the large, lambent eyes beneath them.

At fifteen he entered Trinity College, in Dublin, where he read widely but studied little, so that his degree was finally granted him only as a special favor. At twenty-one he first visited England, and became secretary to Sir William Temple, at Moor Park. Temple, after a distinguished career in diplomacy, had retired to his fine country estate in Surrey. He is remembered now for several things—for having entertained Peter the Great of Russia; for having, while young, won the affections of Dorothy Osborne, whose letters to him are charming in their grace and archness; for having been the patron of Jonathan Swift; and for fathering the young girl named Esther Johnson, a waif, born out of wedlock, to whom Temple gave a place in his household.

When Swift first met her, Esther Johnson was only eight years old; and part of his duties at Moor Park consisted in giving her what was then an unusual education for a girl. She was, however, still a child, and nothing serious could have passed between the raw youth and this

little girl who learned the lessons that he imposed upon her.

Such acquaintance as they had was rudely broken off. Temple, a man of high position, treated Swift with an urbane condescension which drove the young man's independent soul into a frenzy. He returned to Ireland, where he was ordained a clergyman, and received a small parish at Kilroot, near Belfast.

It was here that the love-note was first seriously heard in the discordant music of Swift's career. A college friend of his named Waring had a sister who was about the age of Swift, and whom he met quite frequently at Kilroot. Not very much is known of this episode, but there is evidence that Swift fell in love with the girl, whom he rather romantically called "Varina."

This cannot be called a serious love-affair. Swift was lonely, and Jane Waring was probably the only girl of refinement who lived near Kilroot. Furthermore, she had inherited a small fortune, while Swift was miserably poor, and had nothing to offer except the shadowy prospect of future advancement in England. He was definitely refused by her; and it

was this, perhaps, that led him to resolve on going back to England and making his peace with Sir William Temple.

On leaving, Swift wrote a passionate letter to Miss Waring—the only true love-letter that remains to us of their correspondence. He protests that he does not want Varina's fortune, and that he will wait until he is in a position to marry her on equal terms. There is a smoldering flame of jealousy running through the letter. Swift charges her with being cold, affected, and willing to flirt with persons who are quite beneath her.

Varina played no important part in Swift's larger life thereafter; but something must be said of this affair in order to show, first of all, that Swift's love for her was due only to proximity, and that when he ceased to feel it he could be not only hard, but harsh. His fiery spirit must have made a deep impression on Miss Waring; for though she at the time refused him, she afterward remembered him, and tried to renew their old relations. Indeed, no sooner had Swift been made rector of a larger parish, than Varina let him know that she had changed her mind, and was ready to marry him; but by this time Swift had lost all interest

in her. He wrote an answer which even his truest admirers have called brutal.

"Yes," he said in substance, "I will marry you, though you have treated me vilely, and though you are living in a sort of social sink. I am still poor, though you probably think otherwise. However, I will marry you on certain conditions. First, you must be educated, so that you can entertain me. Next, you must put up with all my whims and likes and dislikes. Then you must live wherever I please. On these terms I will take you, without reference to your looks or to your income. As to the first, cleanliness is all that I require; as to the second, I only ask that it be enough."

Such a letter as this was like a blow from a bludgeon. The insolence, the contempt, and the hardness of it were such as no self-respecting woman could endure. It put an end to their acquaintance, as Swift undoubtedly intended it should do. He would have been less censurable had he struck Varina with his fist or kicked her.

The true reason for Swift's utter change of heart is found, no doubt, in the beginning of what was destined to be his long intimacy with Esther Johnson. When Swift left Sir William Temple's in a huff, Esther had been a mere

schoolgirl. Now, on his return, she was fifteen years of age, and seemed older. She had blossomed out into a very comely girl, vivacious, clever, and physically well developed, with dark hair, sparkling eyes, and features that were unusually regular and lovely.

For three years the two were close friends and intimate associates, though it cannot be said that Swift ever made open love to her. To the outward eye they were no more than fellow workers. Yet love does not need the spoken word and the formal declaration to give it life and make it deep and strong. Esther Johnson, to whom Swift gave the pet name of "Stella," grew into the existence of this fiery, bold, and independent genius. All that he did she knew. She was his confidante. As to his writings, his hopes, and his enmities, she was the mistress of all his secrets. For her, at last, no other man existed.

On Sir William Temple's death, Esther Johnson came into a small fortune, though she now lost her home at Moor Park. Swift returned to Ireland, and soon afterward he invited Stella to join him there.

Swift was now thirty-four years of age, and Stella a very attractive girl of twenty. One

might have expected that the two would marry, and yet they did not do so. Every precaution was taken to avoid anything like scandal. Stella was accompanied by a friend—a widow named Mrs. Dingley—without whose presence, or that of some third person, Swift never saw Esther Johnson. When Swift was absent, however, the two ladies occupied his apartments; and Stella became more than ever essential to his happiness.

When they were separated for any length of time Swift wrote to Stella in a sort of baby-talk, which they called “the little language.” It was made up of curious abbreviations and childish words, growing more and more complicated as the years went on. It is interesting to think of this stern and often savage genius, who loved to hate, and whose hate was almost less terrible than his love, babbling and prattling in little half caressing sentences, as a mother might babble over her first child. Pedantic writers have professed to find in Swift’s use of this “little language” the coming shadow of that insanity which struck him down in his old age.

As it is, these letters are among the curiosities of amatory correspondence. When Swift writes “oo” for “you,” and “deeleast” for

“dearest,” and “vely” for “very,” there is no need of an interpreter; but “rettle” for “letter,” “dallars” for “girls,” and “givar” for “devil,” are at first rather difficult to guess. Then there is a system of abbreviating. “Md” means “my dear,” “Ppt” means “poppet,” and “Pdfr,” with which Swift sometimes signed his epistles, “poor, dear, foolish rogue.”

The letters reveal how very closely the two were bound together, yet still there was no talk of marriage. On one occasion, after they had been together for three years in Ireland, Stella might have married another man. This was a friend of Swift’s, one Dr. Tisdall, who made energetic love to the sweet-faced English girl. Tisdall accused Swift of poisoning Stella’s mind against him. Swift replied that such was not the case. He said that no feelings of his own would ever lead him to influence the girl if she preferred another.

It is quite sure, then, that Stella clung wholly to Swift, and cared nothing for the proffered love of any other man. Thus through the years the relations of the two remained unchanged, until in 1710 Swift left Ireland and appeared as a very brilliant figure in the London drawing-rooms of the great Tory leaders of the day.

He was now a man of mark, because of his ability as a controversialist. He had learned the manners of the world, and he carried himself with an air of power which impressed all those who met him. Among these persons was a Miss Hester—or Esther—Vanhomrigh, the daughter of a rather wealthy widow who was living in London at that time. Miss Vanhomrigh—a name which she and her mother pronounced “Vanmeury”—was then seventeen years of age, or twelve years younger than the patient Stella.

Esther Johnson, through her long acquaintance with Swift, and from his confidence in her, had come to treat him almost as an intellectual equal. She knew all his moods, some of which were very difficult, and she bore them all; though when he was most tyrannous she became only passive, waiting, with a woman's wisdom, for the tempest to blow over.

Miss Vanhomrigh, on the other hand, was one of those girls who, though they have high spirit, take an almost voluptuous delight in yielding to a spirit that is stronger still. This beautiful creature felt a positive fascination in Swift's presence and his imperious manner. When his eyes flashed, and his voice thundered

out words of anger, she looked at him with adoration, and bowed in a sort of ecstasy before him. If he chose to accost a great lady with "Well, madam, are you as ill-natured and disagreeable as when I met you last?" Esther Vanhomrigh thrilled at the insolent audacity of the man. Her evident fondness for him exercised a seductive influence over Swift.

As the two were thrown more and more together, the girl lost all her self-control. Swift did not in any sense make love to her, though he gave her the somewhat fanciful name of "Vanessa"; but she, driven on by a high-strung, unbridled temperament, made open love to him. When he was about to return to Ireland, there came one startling moment when Vanessa flung herself into the arms of Swift, and amazed him by pouring out a torrent of passionate endearments.

Swift seems to have been surprised. He did what he could to quiet her. He told her that they were too unequal in years and fortune for anything but friendship, and he offered to give her as much friendship as she desired.

Doubtless he thought that, after returning to Ireland, he would not see Vanessa any more. In this, however, he was mistaken. An ardent

girl, with a fortune of her own, was not to be kept from the man whom absence only made her love the more. In addition, Swift carried on his correspondence with her, which served to fan the flame and to increase the sway that Swift had already acquired.

Vanessa wrote, and with every letter she burned and pined. Swift replied, and each reply enhanced her yearning for him. Ere long, Vanessa's mother died, and Vanessa herself hastened to Ireland and took up her residence near Dublin. There, for years, was enacted this tragic comedy—Esther Johnson was near Swift, and had all his confidence; Esther Vanhomrigh was kept apart from him, while still receiving missives from him, and, later, even visits.

It was at this time, after he had become dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, in Dublin, that Swift was married to Esther Johnson—for it seems probable that the ceremony took place, though it was nothing more than a form. They still saw each other only in the presence of a third person. Nevertheless, some knowledge of their close relationship leaked out. Stella had been jealous of her rival during the years that Swift spent in London. Vanessa was now told that

Swift was married to the other woman, or that she was his mistress. Writhing with jealousy, she wrote directly to Stella, and asked whether she was Dean Swift's wife. In answer Stella replied that she was, and then she sent Vanessa's letter to Swift himself.

All the fury of his nature was roused in him; and he was a man who could be very terrible when angry. He might have remembered the intense love which Vanessa bore for him, the humility with which she had accepted his conditions, and, finally, the loneliness of this girl.

But Swift was utterly unsparing. No gleam of pity entered his heart as he leaped upon a horse and galloped out to Marley Abbey, where she was living—"his prominent eyes arched by jet-black brows and glaring with the green fury of a cat's." Reaching the house, he dashed into it, with something awful in his looks, made his way to Vanessa, threw her letter down upon the table and, after giving her one frightful glare, turned on his heel, and in a moment more was galloping back to Dublin.

The girl fell to the floor in an agony of terror and remorse. She was taken to her room, and only three weeks afterward was carried forth, having died literally of a broken heart.

202 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

Five years later, Stella also died, withering away a sacrifice to what the world has called Swift's cruel heartlessness and egotism. His greatest public triumphs came to him in his final years of melancholy isolation; but in spite of the applause that greeted *The Drapier Letters* and *Gulliver's Travels*, he brooded morbidly over his past life. At last his powerful mind gave way, so that he died a victim to senile dementia. By his directions his body was interred in the same coffin with Stella's, in the cathedral of which he had been dean.

Such is the story of Dean Swift, and it has always suggested several curious questions. Why, if he loved Stella, did he not marry her long before? Why, when he married her, did he treat her still as if she were not his wife? Why did he allow Vanessa's love to run like a scarlet thread across the fabric of the other affection, which must have been so strong?

Many answers have been given to these questions. That which was formulated by Sir Walter Scott is a simple one, and has been generally accepted. Scott believed that Swift was physically incapacitated for marriage, and that he needed feminine sympathy, which he

took where he could get it, without feeling bound to give anything in return.

If Scott's explanation be the true one, it still leaves Swift exposed to ignominy as a monster of ingratitude. Therefore, many of his biographers have sought other explanations. No one can palliate his conduct toward Vanessa; but Sir Leslie Stephen makes a plea for him with reference to Stella. Sir Leslie points out that until Swift became dean of St. Patrick's his income was far too small to marry on, and that after his brilliant but disappointing three years in London, when his prospects of advancement were ruined, he felt himself a broken man.

Furthermore, his health was always precarious, since he suffered from a distressing illness which attacked him at intervals, rendering him both deaf and giddy. The disease is now known as Ménière's disease, from its classification by the French physician, Ménière, in 1861. Swift felt that he lived in constant danger of some sudden stroke that would deprive him either of life or reason; and his ultimate insanity makes it appear that his forebodings were not wholly futile. Therefore, though he married Stella, he kept the marriage secret, thus leaving her free,

in case of his demise, to marry as a maiden, and not to be regarded as a widow.

Sir Leslie offers the further plea that, after all, Stella's life was what she chose to make it. She enjoyed Swift's friendship, which she preferred to the love of any other man.

Another view is that of Dr. Richard Garnett, who has discussed the question with some subtlety. "Swift," says Dr. Garnett, "was by nature devoid of passion. He was fully capable of friendship, but not of love. The spiritual realm, whether of divine or earthly things, was a region closed to him, where he never set foot." On the side of friendship he must greatly have preferred Stella to Vanessa, and yet the latter assailed him on his weakest side—on the side of his love of imperious domination.

Vanessa hugged the fetters to which Stella merely submitted. Flattered to excess by her surrender, yet conscious of his obligations and his real preference, he could neither discard the one beauty nor desert the other.

Therefore, he temporized with both of them, and when the choice was forced upon him he

madly struck down the woman for whom he cared the less.

One may accept Dr. Garnett's theory with a somewhat altered conclusion. It is not true, as a matter of recorded fact, that Swift was incapable of passion, for when a boy at college he was sought out by various young women, and he sought them out in turn. His fiery letter to Miss Waring points to the same conclusion. When Esther Johnson began to love him he was heart-free, yet unable, because of his straitened means, to marry. But Esther Johnson always appealed more to his reason, his friendship, and his comfort, than to his love, using the word in its material, physical sense. This love was stirred in him by Vanessa. Yet when he met Vanessa he had already gone too far with Esther Johnson to break the bond which had so long united them, nor could he think of a life without her, for she was to him his other self.

At the same time, his more romantic association with Vanessa roused those instincts which he had scarcely known himself to be possessed of. His position was, therefore, most embarrassing. He hoped to end it when he left London and returned to Ireland; but fate was un-

kind to him in this, because Vanessa followed him. He lacked the will to be frank with her, and thus he stood a wretched, halting victim of his own dual nature.

He was a clergyman, and at heart religious. He had also a sense of honor, and both of these traits compelled him to remain true to Esther Johnson. The terrible outbreak which brought about Vanessa's death was probably the wild frenzy of a tortured soul. It recalls the picture of some fierce animal brought at last to bay, and venting its own anguish upon any object that is within reach of its fangs and claws.

No matter how the story may be told, it makes one shiver, for it is a tragedy in which the three participants all meet their doom—one crushed by a lightning-bolt of unreasoning anger, the other wasting away through hope deferred; while the man whom the world will always hold responsible was himself destined to end his years blind and sleepless, bequeathing his fortune to a madhouse, and saying, with his last muttered breath:

“I am a fool!”

**PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY AND
MARY GODWIN**

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY AND MARY GODWIN

A GREAT deal has been said and written in favor of early marriage; and, in a general way, early marriage may be an admirable thing. Young men and young women who have no special gift of imagination, and who have practically reached their full mental development at twenty-one or twenty-two—or earlier, even in their teens—may marry safely; because they are already what they will be. They are not going to experience any growth upward and outward. Passing years simply bring them more closely together, until they have settled down into a sort of domestic unity, by which they think alike, act alike, and even gradually come to look alike.

But early wedlock spells tragedy to the man or the woman of genius. In their teens they have only begun to grow. What they will be ten years hence, no one can prophesy. Therefore, to mate so early in life is to insure almost

210 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

certain storm and stress, and, in the end, domestic wreckage.

As a rule, it is the man, and not the woman, who makes the false step; because it is the man who elects to marry when he is still very young. If he choose some ill-fitting, commonplace, and unresponsive nature to match his own, it is he who is bound in the course of time to learn his great mistake. When the splendid eagle shall have got his growth, and shall begin to soar up into the vault of heaven, the poor little barn-yard fowl that he once believed to be his equal seems very far away in everything. He discovers that she is quite unable to follow him in his towering flights.

The story of Percy Bysshe Shelley is a singular one. The circumstances of his early marriage were strange. The breaking of his marriage-bond was also strange. Shelley himself was an extraordinary creature. He was blamed a great deal in his lifetime for what he did, and since then some have echoed the reproach. Yet it would seem as if, at the very beginning of his life, he was put into a false position against his will. Because of this he was misunderstood until the end of his brief and brilliant and erratic career.

In 1792 the French Revolution burst into flame, the mob of Paris stormed the Tuileries, the King of France was cast into a dungeon to await his execution, and the wild sons of anarchy flung their gauntlet of defiance into the face of Europe. In this tremendous year was born young Shelley; and perhaps his nature represented the spirit of the time.

Certainly, neither from his father nor from his mother did he derive that perpetual unrest and that frantic fondness for revolt which blazed out in the poet when he was still a boy. His father, Mr. Timothy Shelley, was a very usual, thick-headed, unromantic English squire. His mother—a woman of much beauty, but of no exceptional traits—was the daughter of another squire, and at the time of her marriage was simply one of ten thousand fresh-faced, pleasant-spoken English country girls. If we look for a strain of the romantic in Shelley's ancestry, we shall have to find it in the person of his grandfather, who was a very remarkable and powerful character.

This person, Bysshe Shelley by name, had in his youth been associated with some mystery. He was not born in England, but in America—and in those days the name "America" meant

almost anything indefinite and peculiar. However this might be, Bysshe Shelley, though a scion of a good old English family, had wandered in strange lands, and it was whispered that he had seen strange sights and done strange things. According to one legend, he had been married in America, though no one knew whether his wife was white or black, or how he had got rid of her.

He might have remained in America all his life, had not a small inheritance fallen to his share. This brought him back to England, and he soon found that England was in reality the place to make his fortune. He was a man of magnificent physique. His roving had given him ease and grace, and the power which comes from a wide experience of life. He could be extremely pleasing when he chose; and he soon won his way into the good graces of a rich heiress, whom he married.

With her wealth he became an important personage, and consorted with gentlemen and statesmen of influence, attaching himself particularly to the Duke of Northumberland, by whose influence he was made a baronet. When his rich wife died, Shelley married a still richer bride; and so this man, who started out as a

mere adventurer without a shilling to his name, died in 1813, leaving more than a million dollars in cash, with lands whose rent-roll yielded a hundred thousand dollars every year.

If any touch of the romantic which we find in Shelley is a matter of heredity, we must trace it to this able, daring, restless, and magnificent old grandfather, who was the *beau idéal* of an English squire—the sort of squire who had added foreign graces to native sturdiness. But young Shelley, the future poet, seemed scarcely to be English at all. As a young boy he cared nothing for athletic sports. He was given to much reading. He thought a good deal about abstractions with which most schoolboys never concern themselves at all.

Consequently, both in private schools and afterward at Eton, he became a sort of rebel against authority. He resisted the fagging-system. He spoke contemptuously of physical prowess. He disliked anything that he was obliged to do, and he rushed eagerly into whatever was forbidden.

Finally, when he was sent to University College, Oxford, he broke all bounds. At a time when Tory England was aghast over the French Revolution and its results, Shelley

talked of liberty and equality on all occasions. He made friends with an uncouth but able fellow student, who bore the remarkable name of Thomas Jefferson Hogg—a name that seems rampant with republicanism—and very soon he got himself expelled from the university for publishing a little tract of an infidel character called “A Defense of Atheism.”

His expulsion for such a cause naturally shocked his father. It probably disturbed Shelley himself; but, after all, it gave him some satisfaction to be a martyr for the cause of free speech. He went to London with his friend Hogg, and took lodgings there. He read omnivorously—Hogg says as much as sixteen hours a day. He would walk through the most crowded streets poring over a volume, while holding another under one arm.

His mind was full of fancies. He had begun what was afterward called “his passion for reforming everything.” He despised most of the laws of England. He thought its Parliament ridiculous. He hated its religion. He was particularly opposed to marriage. This last fact gives some point to the circumstances which almost immediately confronted him.

Shelley was now about nineteen years old—

an age at which most English boys are emerging from the public schools, and are still in the hobbledehoy stage of their formation. In a way, he was quite far from boyish; yet in his knowledge of life he was little more than a mere child. He knew nothing thoroughly—much less the ways of men and women. He had no visible means of existence except a small allowance from his father. His four sisters, who were at a boarding-school on Clapham Common, used to save their pin-money and send it to their gifted brother so that he might not actually starve. These sisters he used to call upon from time to time, and through them he made the acquaintance of a sixteen-year-old girl named Harriet Westbrook.

Harriet Westbrook was the daughter of a black-visaged keeper of a coffee-house in Mount Street, called “Jew Westbrook,” partly because of his complexion, and partly because of his ability to retain what he had made. He was, indeed, fairly well off, and had sent his younger daughter, Harriet, to the school where Shelley’s sisters studied.

Harriet Westbrook seems to have been a most precocious person. Any girl of sixteen is, of course, a great deal older and more mature than

a youth of nineteen. In the present instance Harriet might have been Shelley's senior by five years. There is no doubt that she fell in love with him; but, having done so, she by no means acted in the shy and timid way that would have been most natural to a very young girl in her first love-affair. Having decided that she wanted him, she made up her mind to get him at any cost, and her audacity was equaled only by his simplicity. She was rather attractive in appearance, with abundant hair, a plump figure, and a pink-and-white complexion. This description makes of her a rather doll-like girl; but doll-like girls are just the sort to attract an inexperienced young man who has yet to learn that beauty and charm are quite distinct from prettiness, and infinitely superior to it.

In addition to her prettiness, Harriet Westbrook had a vivacious manner and talked quite pleasingly. She was likewise not a bad listener; and she would listen by the hour to Shelley in his rhapsodies about chemistry, poetry, the failure of Christianity, the national debt, and human liberty, all of which he jumbled up without much knowledge, but in a lyric strain of impassioned eagerness which would probably have made the multiplication-table thrilling.

For Shelley himself was a creature of extraordinary fascination, both then and afterward. There are no likenesses of him that do him justice, because they cannot convey that singular appeal which the man himself made to almost every one who met him.

The eminent painter, Mulready, once said that Shelley was too beautiful for portraiture; and yet the descriptions of him hardly seem to bear this out. He was quite tall and slender, but he stooped so much as to make him appear undersized. His head was very small—quite disproportionately so; but this was counteracted to the eye by his long and tumbled hair which, when excited, he would rub and twist in a thousand different directions until it was actually bushy. His eyes and mouth were his best features. The former were of a deep violet blue, and when Shelley felt deeply moved they seemed luminous with a wonderful and almost unearthly light. His mouth was finely chiseled, and might be regarded as representing perfection.

One great defect he had, and this might well have overbalanced his attractive face. The defect in question was his voice. One would have expected to hear from him melodious sounds,

and vocal tones both rich and penetrating; but, as a matter of fact, his voice was shrill at the very best, and became actually discordant and peacock-like in moments of emotion.

Such, then, was Shelley, star-eyed, with the delicate complexion of a girl, wonderfully mobile in his features, yet speaking in a voice high pitched and almost raucous. For the rest, he arrayed himself with care and in expensive clothing, even though he took no thought of neatness, so that his garments were almost always rumpled and wrinkled from his frequent writhings on couches and on the floor. Shelley had a strange and almost primitive habit of rolling on the earth, and another of thrusting his tousled head close up to the hottest fire in the house, or of lying in the glaring sun when out of doors. It is related that he composed one of his finest poems—"The Cenci"—in Italy, while stretched out with face upturned to an almost tropical sun.

But such as he was, and though he was not yet famous, Harriet Westbrook, the rosy-faced schoolgirl, fell in love with him, and rather plainly let him know that she had done so. There are a thousand ways in which a woman can convey this information without doing any-

thing unmaidenly; and of all these little arts Miss Westbrook was instinctively a mistress.

She played upon Shelley's feelings by telling him that her father was cruel to her, and that he contemplated actions still more cruel. There is something absurdly comical about the grievance which she brought to Shelley; but it is much more comical to note the tremendous seriousness with which he took it. He wrote to his friend Hogg:

Her father has persecuted her in a most horrible way, by endeavoring to compel her to go to school. She asked my advice; resistance was the answer. At the same time I essayed to mollify Mr. Westbrook, in vain! I advised her to resist. She wrote to say that resistance was useless, but that she would fly with me and throw herself on my protection.

Some letters that have recently come to light show that there was a dramatic scene between Harriet Westbrook and Shelley—a scene in the course of which she threw her arms about his neck and wept upon his shoulder. Here was a curious situation. Shelley was not at all in love with her. He had explicitly declared this only a short time before. Yet here was a pretty girl about to suffer the “horrible persecution” of being sent to school, and finding no alterna-

tive save to "throw herself on his protection"—in other words, to let him treat her as he would, and to become his mistress.

The absurdity of the situation makes one smile. Common sense should have led some one to box Harriet's ears and send her off to school without a moment's hesitation; while as for Shelley, he should have been told how ludicrous was the whole affair. But he was only nineteen, and she was only sixteen, and the crisis seemed portentous. Nothing could be more flattering to a young man's vanity than to have this girl cast herself upon him for protection. It did not really matter that he had not loved her hitherto, and that he was already half engaged to another Harriet—his cousin, Miss Grove. He could not stop and reason with himself. He must like a true knight rescue lovely girlhood from the horrors of a school!

It is not unlikely that this whole affair was partly managed or manipulated by the girl's father. Jew Westbrook knew that Shelley was related to rich and titled people, and that he was certain, if he lived, to become Sir Percy, and to be the heir of his grandfather's estates. Hence it may be that Harriet's queer conduct was not wholly of her own prompting.

In any case, however, it proved to be successful. Shelley's ardent and impulsive nature could not bear to see a girl in tears and appealing for his help. Hence, though in his heart she was very little to him, his romantic nature gave up for her sake the affection that he had felt for his cousin, his own disbelief in marriage, and finally the common sense which ought to have told him not to marry any one on two hundred pounds a year.

So the pair set off for Edinburgh by stage-coach. It was a weary and most uncomfortable journey. When they reached the Scottish capital, they were married by the Scottish law. Their money was all gone; but their landlord, with a jovial sympathy for romance, let them have a room, and treated them to a rather promiscuous wedding-banquet, in which every one in the house participated.

Such is the story of Shelley's marriage, contracted at nineteen with a girl of sixteen who most certainly lured him on against his own better judgment and in the absence of any actual love.

The girl whom he had taken to himself was a well-meaning little thing. She tried for a time to meet her husband's moods and to be

a real companion to him. But what could one expect from such a union? Shelley's father withdrew the income which he had previously given. Jew Westbrook refused to contribute anything, hoping, probably, that this course would bring the Shelleys to the rescue. But as it was, the young pair drifted about from place to place, getting very precarious supplies, running deeper into debt each day, and finding less and less to admire in each other.

Shelley took to laudanum. Harriet dropped her abstruse studies, which she had taken up to please her husband, but which could only puzzle her small brain. She soon developed some of the unpleasant traits of the class to which she belonged. In this her sister Eliza—a hard and grasping middle-aged woman—had her share. She set Harriet against her husband, and made life less endurable for both. She was so much older than the pair that she came in and ruled their household like a typical stepmother.

A child was born, and Shelley very generously went through a second form of marriage, so as to comply with the English law; but by this time there was little hope of righting things again. Shelley was much offended because Harriet would not nurse the child. He

believed her hard because she saw without emotion an operation performed upon the infant.

Finally, when Shelley at last came into a considerable sum of money, Harriet and Eliza made no pretense of caring for anything except the spending of it in "bonnet-shops" and on carriages and display. In time—that is to say, in three years after their marriage—Harriet left her husband and went to London and to Bath, prompted by her elder sister.

This proved to be the end of an unfortunate marriage. Word was brought to Shelley that his wife was no longer faithful to him. He, on his side, had carried on a semisentimental platonic correspondence with a schoolmistress, one Miss Hitchener. But until now his life had been one great mistake—a life of restlessness, of unsatisfied longing, of a desire that had no name. Then came the perhaps inevitable meeting with the one whom he should have met before.

Shelley had taken a great interest in William Godwin, the writer and radical philosopher. Godwin's household was a strange one. There was Fanny Imlay, a child born out of wedlock, the offspring of Gilbert Imlay, an American merchant, and of Mary Wollstonecraft, whom Godwin had subsequently married. There was

224 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

also a singularly striking girl who then styled herself Mary Jane Clairmont, and who was afterward known as Claire Clairmont, she and her brother being the early children of Godwin's second wife.

One day in 1814, Shelley called on Godwin, and found there a beautiful young girl in her seventeenth year, "with shapely golden head, a face very pale and pure, a great forehead, earnest hazel eyes, and an expression at once of sensibility and firmness about her delicately curved lips." This was Mary Godwin—one who had inherited her mother's power of mind and likewise her grace and sweetness.

From the very moment of their meeting Shelley and this girl were fated to be joined together, and both of them were well aware of it. Each felt the other's presence exert a magnetic thrill. Each listened eagerly to what the other said. Each thought of nothing, and each cared for nothing, in the other's absence. It was a great compelling elemental force which drove the two together and bound them fast. Beside this marvelous experience, how pale and pitiful and paltry seemed the affectations of Harriet Westbrook!

In little more than a month from the time of

their first meeting, Shelley and Mary Godwin and Miss Clairmont left Godwin's house at four o'clock in the morning, and hurried across the Channel to Calais. They wandered almost like vagabonds across France, eating black bread and the coarsest fare, walking on the highways when they could not afford to ride, and putting up with every possible inconvenience. Yet it is worth noting that neither then nor at any other time did either Shelley or Mary regret what they had done. To the very end of the poet's brief career they were inseparable.

Later he was able to pension Harriet, who, being of a morbid disposition, ended her life by drowning—not, it may be said, because of grief for Shelley. It has been told that Fanny Imlay, Mary's sister, likewise committed suicide because Shelley did not care for her, but this has also been disproved. There was really nothing to mar the inner happiness of the poet and the woman who, at the very end, became his wife. Living, as they did, in Italy and Switzerland, they saw much of their own countrymen, such as Landor and Leigh Hunt and Byron, to whose fascinations poor Miss Clairmont yielded, and became the mother of the little girl Allegra.

But there could have been no truer union

than this of Shelley's with the woman whom nature had intended for him. It was in his love-life, far more than in his poetry, that he attained completeness. When he died by drowning, in 1822, and his body was burned in the presence of Lord Byron, he was truly mourned by the one whom he had only lately made his wife. As a poet he never reached the same perfection; for his genius was fitful and uncertain, rare in its flights, and mingled always with that which disappoints.

As the lover and husband of Mary Godwin, there was nothing left to wish. In his verse, however, the truest word concerning him will always be that exquisite sentence of Matthew Arnold:

“A beautiful and ineffectual angel beating his luminous wings against the void in vain.”

THE STORY OF THE HUGOS

THE STORY OF THE HUGOS

VICTOR HUGO, after all criticisms have been made, stands as a literary colossus. He had imaginative power which makes his finest passages fairly crash upon the reader's brain like blasting thunderbolts. His novels, even when translated, are read and reread by people of every degree of education. There is something vast, something almost Titanic, about the grandeur and gorgeousness of his fancy. His prose resembles the sonorous blare of an immense military band. Readers of English care less for his poetry; yet in his verse one can find another phase of his intellect. He could write charmingly, in exquisite cadences, poems for lovers and for little children. His gifts were varied, and he knew thoroughly the life and thought of his own countrymen; and, therefore, in his later days he was almost deified by them.

At the same time, there were defects in his intellect and character which are perceptible in

230 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

what he wrote, as well as in what he did. He had the Gallic wit in great measure, but he was absolutely devoid of any sense of humor. This is why, in both his prose and his poetry, his most tremendous pages often come perilously near to bombast; and this is why, again, as a man, his vanity was almost as great as his genius. He had good reason to be vain, and yet, if he had possessed a gleam of humor, he would never have allowed his egoism to make him arrogant. As it was, he felt himself exalted above other mortals. Whatever he did or said or wrote was right because he did it or said it or wrote it.

This often showed itself in rather whimsical ways. Thus, after he had published the first edition of his novel, *The Man Who Laughs*, an English gentleman called upon him, and, after some courteous compliments, suggested that in subsequent editions the name of an English peer who figures in the book should be changed from Tom Jim-Jack.

"For," said the Englishman, "Tom Jim-Jack is a name that could not possibly belong to an English noble, or, indeed, to any Englishman. The presence of it in your powerful story makes it seem to English readers a little grotesque."

Victor Hugo drew himself up with an air of high disdain.

"Who are you?" asked he.

"I am an Englishman," was the answer, "and naturally I know what names are possible in English."

Hugo drew himself up still higher, and on his face there was a smile of utter contempt.

"Yes," said he. "You are an Englishman; but I—I am Victor Hugo."

In another book Hugo had spoken of the Scottish bagpipes as "bugpipes." This gave some offense to his Scottish admirers. A great many persons told him that the word was "bagpipes," and not "bugpipes." But he replied with irritable obstinacy:

"I am Victor Hugo; and if I choose to write it 'bugpipes,' it is 'bugpipes.' It is anything that I prefer to make it. It is so, because I call it so!"

So, Victor Hugo became a violent republican, because he did not wish France to be an empire or a kingdom, in which an emperor or a king would be his superior in rank. He always spoke of Napoleon III as "M. Bonaparte." He refused to call upon the gentle-mannered Emperor of Brazil, because he was an emperor;

232 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

although Dom Pedro expressed an earnest desire to meet the poet.

When the German army was besieging Paris, Hugo proposed to fight a duel with the King of Prussia, and to have the result of it settle the war; "for," said he, "the King of Prussia is a great king, but I am Victor Hugo, the great poet. We are, therefore, equal."

In spite, however, of his ardent republicanism, he was very fond of speaking of his own noble descent. Again and again he styled himself "a peer of France;" and he and his family made frequent allusions to the knights and bishops and counselors of state with whom he claimed an ancestral relation. This was more than inconsistent. It was somewhat ludicrous; because Victor Hugo's ancestry was by no means noble. The Hugos of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were not in any way related to the poet's family, which was eminently honest and respectable, but by no means one of distinction. His grandfather was a carpenter. One of his aunts was the wife of a baker, another of a barber, while the third earned her living as a provincial dressmaker.

If the poet had been less vain and more sincerely democratic, he would have been proud to

think that he sprang from good, sound, sturdy stock, and would have laughed at titles. As it was, he jeered at all pretensions of rank in other men, while he claimed for himself distinctions that were not really his. His father was a soldier who rose from the ranks until, under Napoleon, he reached the grade of general. His mother was the daughter of a ship owner in Nantes.

Victor Hugo was born in February, 1802, during the Napoleonic wars, and his early years were spent among the camps and within the sound of the cannon-thunder. It was fitting that he should have been born and reared in an age of upheaval, revolt, and battle. He was essentially the laureate of revolt; and in some of his novels—as in *Ninety-Three*—the drum and the trumpet roll and ring through every chapter.

The present paper has, of course, nothing to do with Hugo's public life; yet it is necessary to remember the complicated nature of the man—all his power, all his sweetness of disposition, and likewise all his vanity and his eccentricities. We must remember, also, that he was French, so that his story may be interpreted in the light of the French character.

234 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

At the age of fifteen he was domiciled in Paris, and though still a schoolboy and destined for the study of law, he dreamed only of poetry and of literature. He received honorable mention from the French Academy in 1817, and in the following year took prizes in a poetical competition. At seventeen he began the publication of a literary journal, which survived until 1821. His astonishing energy became evident in the many publications which he put forth in these boyish days. He began to become known. Although poetry, then as now, was not very profitable even when it was admired, one of his slender volumes brought him the sum of seven hundred francs, which seemed to him not only a fortune in itself, but the forerunner of still greater prosperity.

It was at this time, while still only twenty years of age, that he met a young girl of eighteen with whom he fell rather tempestuously in love. Her name was Adèle Foucher, and she was the daughter of a clerk in the War Office. When one is very young and also a poet, it takes very little to feed the flame of passion. Victor Hugo was often a guest at the apartments of M. Foucher, where he was received by that gentleman and his family. French eti-

quette, of course, forbade any direct communication between the visitor and Adèle. She was still a very young girl, and was supposed to take no share in the conversation. Therefore, while the others talked, she sat demurely by the fireside and sewed.

Her dark eyes and abundant hair, her grace of manner, and the picture which she made as the firelight played about her, kindled a flame in the susceptible heart of Victor Hugo. Though he could not speak to her, he at least could look at her; and, before long, his share in the conversation was very slight. This was set down, at first, to his absent-mindedness; but looks can be as eloquent as spoken words. Mme. Foucher, with a woman's keen intelligence, noted the adoring gaze of Victor Hugo as he silently watched her daughter. The young Adèle herself was no less intuitive than her mother. It was very well understood, in the course of a few months, that Victor Hugo was in love with Adèle Foucher.

Her father and mother took counsel about the matter, and Hugo himself, in a burst of lyrical eloquence, confessed that he adored Adèle and wished to marry her. Her parents naturally objected. The girl was but a child. She had

no dowry, nor had Victor Hugo any settled income. They were not to think of marriage. But when did a common-sense decision, such as this, ever separate a man and a woman who have felt the thrill of first love? Victor Hugo was insistent. With his supreme self-confidence, he declared that he was bound to be successful, and that in a very short time he would be illustrious. Adèle, on her side, created "an atmosphere" at home by weeping frequently, and by going about with hollow eyes and wistful looks.

The Foucher family removed from Paris to a country town. Victor Hugo immediately followed them. Fortunately for him, his poems had attracted the attention of Louis XVIII, who was flattered by some of the verses. He sent Hugo five hundred francs for an ode, and soon afterward settled upon him a pension of a thousand francs. Here at least was an income—a very small one, to be sure, but still an income. Perhaps Adèle's father was impressed not so much by the actual money as by the evidence of the royal favor. At any rate, he withdrew his opposition, and the two young people were married in October, 1822—both of them being under age, unformed, and immature.

Their story is another warning against too early marriage. It is true that they lived together until Mme. Hugo's death—a married life of forty-six years—yet their story presents phases which would have made this impossible had they not been French.

For a time, Hugo devoted all his energies to work. The record of his steady upward progress is a part of the history of literature, and need not be repeated here. The poet and his wife were soon able to leave the latter's family abode, and to set up their own household god in a home which was their own. Around them there were gathered, in a sort of salon, all the best-known writers of the day—dramatists, critics, poets, and romancers. The Hugos knew everybody.

Unfortunately, one of their visitors cast into their new life a drop of corroding bitterness. This intruder was Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, a man two years younger than Victor Hugo, and one who blended learning, imagination, and a gift of critical analysis. Sainte-Beuve is to-day best remembered as a critic, and he was perhaps the greatest critic ever known in France. But in 1830 he was a slender, insinuating youth who cultivated

238 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

a gift for sensuous and somewhat morbid poetry.

He had won Victor Hugo's friendship by writing an enthusiastic notice of Hugo's dramatic works. Hugo, in turn, styled Sainte-Beuve "an eagle," "a blazing star," and paid him other compliments no less gorgeous and Hugoesque. But in truth, if Sainte-Beuve frequented the Hugo salon, it was less because of his admiration for the poet than from his desire to win the love of the poet's wife.

It is quite impossible to say how far he attracted the serious attention of Adèle Hugo. Sainte-Beuve represents a curious type, which is far more common in France and Italy than in the countries of the north. Human nature is not very different in cultivated circles anywhere. Man loves, and seeks to win the object of his love; or, as the old English proverb has it:

It's a man's part to try,
And a woman's to deny.

But only in the Latin countries do men who have tried make their attempts public, and seek to produce an impression that they have been successful, and that the woman has not denied.

This sort of man, in English-speaking lands, is set down simply as a cad, and is excluded from people's houses; but in some other countries the thing is regarded with a certain amount of toleration. We see it in the two books written respectively by Alfred de Musset and George Sand. We have seen it still later in our own times, in that strange and half-repulsive story in which the Italian novelist and poet, Gabriele d'Annunzio, under a very thin disguise, revealed his relations with the famous actress, Eleanora Duse. Anglo-Saxons thrust such books aside with a feeling of disgust for the man who could so betray a sacred confidence and perhaps exaggerate a simple indiscretion into actual guilt. But it is not so in France and Italy. And this is precisely what Sainte-Beuve attempted.

Dr. George McLean Harper, in his lately published study of Sainte-Beuve, has summed the matter up admirably, in speaking of *The Book of Love*:

He had the vein of emotional self-disclosure, the vein of romantic or sentimental confession. This last was not a rich lode, and so he was at pains to charge it secretly with ore which he exhumed gloatingly, but which was really base metal. The impulse that led him along this false route was partly am-

240 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

bition, partly sensuality. Many a worse man would have been restrained by self-respect and good taste. And no man with a sense of honor would have permitted *The Book of Love* to see the light—a small collection of verses recording his passion for Mme. Hugo, and designed to implicate her.

He left two hundred and five printed copies of this book to be distributed after his death. A virulent enemy of Sainte-Beuve was not too expressive when he declared that its purpose was “to leave on the life of this woman the gleaming and slimy trace which the passage of a snail leaves on a rose.” Abominable in either case, whether or not the implication was unfounded, Sainte-Beuve’s numerous innuendoes in regard to Mme. Hugo are an indelible stain on his memory, and his infamy not only cost him his most precious friendships, but crippled him in every high endeavor.

How monstrous was this violation of both friendship and love may be seen in the following quotation from his writings:

In that inevitable hour, when the gloomy tempest and the jealous gulf shall roll over our heads, a sealed bottle, belched forth from the abyss, will render immortal our two names, their close alliance, and our double memory aspiring after union.

Whether or not Mme. Hugo’s relations with Sainte-Beuve justified the latter even in thinking such thoughts as these, one need not inquire too minutely. Evidently, though, Victor Hugo

could no longer be the friend of the man who almost openly boasted that he had dishonored him. There exist some sharp letters which passed between Hugo and Sainte-Beuve. Their intimacy was ended.

But there was something more serious than this. Sainte-Beuve had in fact succeeded in leaving a taint upon the name of Victor Hugo's wife. That Hugo did not repudiate her makes it fairly plain that she was innocent; yet a high-spirited, sensitive soul like Hugo's could never forget that in the world's eye she was compromised. The two still lived together as before; but now the poet felt himself released from the strict obligations of the marriage-bond.

It may perhaps be doubted whether he would in any case have remained faithful all his life. He was, as Mr. H. W. Wack well says, "a man of powerful sensations, physically as well as mentally. Hugo pursued every opportunity for new work, new sensations, fresh emotion. He desired to absorb as much on life's eager forward way as his great nature craved. His range in all things—mental, physical, and spiritual—was so far beyond the ordinary that the gage of average cannot be applied to him.

242 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

The cavil of the moralist did not disturb him."

Hence, it is not improbable that Victor Hugo might have broken through the bonds of marital fidelity, even had Sainte-Beuve never written his abnormal poems; but certainly these poems hastened a result which may or may not have been otherwise inevitable. Hugo no longer turned wholly to the dark-haired, dark-eyed Adèle as summing up for him the whole of womanhood. A veil was drawn, as it were, from before his eyes, and he looked on other women and found them beautiful.

It was in 1833, soon after Hugo's play "Lu-crèce Borgia" had been accepted for production, that a lady called one morning at Hugo's house in the Place Royale. She was then between twenty and thirty years of age, slight of figure, winsome in her bearing, and one who knew the arts which appeal to men. For she was no inexperienced *ingénue*. The name upon her visiting-card was "Mme. Drouet"; and by this name she had been known in Paris as a clever and somewhat gifted actress. Théophile Gautier, whose cult was the worship of physical beauty, wrote in almost lyric prose of her seductive charm.

At nineteen, after she had been cast upon

the world, dowered with that terrible combination, poverty and beauty, she had lived openly with a sculptor named Pradier. This has a certain importance in the history of French art. Pradier had received a commission to execute a statue representing Strasburg—the statue which stands to-day in the Place de la Concorde, and which patriotic Frenchmen and Frenchwomen drape in mourning and half bury in immortelles, in memory of that city of Alsace which so long was French, but which to-day is German—one of Germany's great prizes taken in the war of 1870.

Five years before her meeting with Hugo, Pradier had rather brutally severed his connection with her, and she had accepted the protection of a Russian nobleman. At this time she was known by her real name—Julienne Josephine Gauvin; but having gone upon the stage, she assumed the appellation by which she was thereafter known, that of Juliette Drouet.

Her visit to Hugo was for the purpose of asking him to secure for her a part in his forthcoming play. The dramatist was willing, but unfortunately all the major characters had been provided for, and he was able to offer her only

the minor one of the Princesse Negroni. The charming deference with which she accepted the offered part attracted Hugo's attention. Such amiability is very rare in actresses who have had engagements at the best theaters. He resolved to see her again; and he did so, time after time, until he was thoroughly captivated by her.

She knew her value, and as yet was by no means infatuated with him. At first he was to her simply a means of getting on in her profession—simply another influential acquaintance. Yet she brought to bear upon him the arts at her command, her beauty and her sympathy, and, last of all, her passionate abandonment.

Hugo was overwhelmed by her. He found that she was in debt, and he managed to see that her debts were paid. He secured her other engagements at the theater, though she was less successful as an actress after she knew him. There came, for a time, a short break in their relations; for, partly out of need, she returned to her Russian nobleman, or at least admitted him to a *ménage à trois*. Hugo underwent for a second time a great disillusionment. Nevertheless, he was not too proud to return to her and to beg her not to be unfaith-

ful any more. Touched by his tears, and perhaps foreseeing his future fame, she gave her promise, and she kept it until her death, nearly half a century later.

Perhaps because she had deceived him once, Hugo never completely lost his prudence in his association with her. He was by no means lavish with money, and he installed her in a rather simple apartment only a short distance from his own home. He gave her an allowance that was relatively small, though later he provided for her amply in his will. But it was to her that he brought all his confidences, to her he entrusted all his interests. She became to him, thenceforth, much more than she appeared to the world at large; for she was his friend, and, as he said, his inspiration.

The fact of their intimate connection became gradually known through Paris. It was known even to Mme. Hugo; but she, remembering the affair of Sainte-Beuve, or knowing how difficult it is to check the will of a man like Hugo, made no sign, and even received Juliette Drouet in her own house and visited her in turn. When the poet's sons grew up to manhood, they, too, spent many hours with their father in the little salon of the former actress.

246 FAMOUS AFFINITIES OF HISTORY

It was a strange and, to an Anglo-Saxon mind, an almost impossible position; yet France forgives much to genius, and in time no one thought of commenting on Hugo's manner of life.

In 1851, when Napoleon III seized upon the government, and when Hugo was in danger of arrest, she assisted him to escape in disguise, and with a forged passport, across the Belgian frontier. During his long exile in Guernsey she lived in the same close relationship to him and to his family. Mme. Hugo died in 1868, having known for thirty-three years that she was only second in her husband's thoughts. Was she doing penance, or was she merely accepting the inevitable? In any case, her position was most pathetic, though she uttered no complaint.

A very curious and poignant picture of her just before her death has been given by the pen of a visitor in Guernsey. He had met Hugo and his sons; he had seen the great novelist eating enormous slices of roast beef and drinking great goblets of red wine at dinner, and he had also watched him early each morning, divested of all his clothing and splashing about in a bath-tub on the top of his house, in view

of all the town. One evening he called and found only Mme. Hugo. She was reclining on a couch, and was evidently suffering great pain. Surprised, he asked where were her husband and her sons.

“Oh,” she replied, “they’ve all gone to Mme. Drouet’s to spend the evening and enjoy themselves. Go also; you’ll not find it amusing here.”

One ponders over this sad scene with conflicting thoughts. Was there really any truth in the story at which Sainte-Beuve more than hinted? If so, Adèle Hugo was more than punished. The other woman had sinned far more; and yet she had never been Hugo’s wife; and hence perhaps it was right that she should suffer less. Suffer she did; for after her devotion to Hugo had become sincere and deep, he betrayed her confidence by an intrigue with a girl who is spoken of as “Claire.” The knowledge of it caused her infinite anguish, but it all came to an end; and she lived past her eightieth year, long after the death of Mme. Hugo. She died only a short time before the poet himself was laid to rest in Paris with magnificent obsequies which an emperor might have envied. In her old age, Juliette Drouet

became very white and very wan ; yet she never quite lost the charm with which, as a girl, she had won the heart of Hugo.

The story has many aspects. One may see in it a retribution, or one may see in it only the cruelty of life. Perhaps it is best regarded simply as a chapter in the strange life-histories of men of genius.



